

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AND FORESTRY**



**2010 SUNSET REVIEW**

**SUBMITTED BY:  
MIKE STRAIN, DVM  
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY**



## COMMISSIONER MIKE STRAIN'S EXECUTIVE STAFF

(225)922-1234

Brent Robbins, DVM - Deputy Commissioner

Fred Bass - Confidential Assistant

Tabitha Gray - Executive Counsel

Dobby Lachney - Executive Assistant

Carrie Castille, Ph.D. - Special Advisor and  
Deputy Assistant Commissioner

Sandra Wittmann - Administrative Assistant

## THE LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry is charged with overseeing the affairs of two of the state's largest industries -- agriculture and forestry. To that end, the agency is responsible for administering the laws, rules and regulations of the state regarding the growing, harvesting, processing, storage and sale of crop and livestock commodities.

To effect these goals, the department is divided into six divisions: one serves the financial, personnel and administrative management functions of the agency; and the other five are largely regulatory, serving to enforce the laws and regulations that govern the growing, harvesting, processing and distribution of Louisiana crops and livestock.

More specifically, the laws, rules and regulations govern the use of pesticides; the quality of fertilizers and seeds; the protection of animal health and food safety; the storage of grains; the inspection of fruits, vegetables, meats, major row crops and eggs; programs to ensure the health and long-term viability of our soil and water resources, the regulation of florists and nurserymen; the policing of livestock and rural farm theft; the registration of livestock brands; the calibration of motor fuel pumps; the calibration of all instruments that weigh and measure items for commercial sale and the growing of forestry seedling stock.

These laws, rules and regulations also ensure that the food is safe to eat and that it is prepared in sanitary processing facilities and that our forests are replanted for sustainability and protected from diseases and fire.

The department also works with other state, regional, national and international sectors of business and government to fulfill its goal of providing general oversight services for many of the affairs of rural Louisiana.

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) is made up of the following offices:

Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (AES)

Office of Agro-Consumer Services (ACS)

Office of Animal Health and Food Safety (AHFS)

Office of Forestry

Office of Management and Finance (OMF)

Office of Soil and Water Conservation (SWC)





## **OFFICE OF AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES**

**TODD PARKER, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER**  
**(225) 925-3770**

Dr. Mark Leblanc, Director – Agricultural Chemistry Programs Division

Craig Roussel, Director – Horticulture and Quarantine Programs Division

Larry Lejeune, Director – Pesticide and Environmental Programs Division

Eric Gates, Director – Seed Programs Division

# OFFICE OF AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

## Program Summary

The Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences is comprised of four divisions: Agricultural Chemistry Programs, Horticulture and Quarantine Programs, Pesticide and Environmental Programs, and Seed Programs. The Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences receives its authority under R.S. 36:628(C). The Office consists of 24 major program areas:

Apiary Regulation	Pesticide Certification and Training
Biotechnology	Pesticide Enforcement and Compliance
Boll Weevil Eradication	Pesticide Registration
Cooperative Agric. Pest Survey	Pesticide Waste Control
Endangered Species	Plant Pest Inspections
Export Certification	Quarantine Authority
Feed Regulation	Seed Certification
Fertilizer Regulation	Seed Regulation
Food Safety	Structural Pest Control
Horticulture Regulation	Sweet Potato Inspections
Nursery Inspections	Water Quality Control
Organic Certification	Worker Protection

The following Commissions are housed within the Office:

Boll Weevil Eradication Commission  
Feed Commission  
Fertilizer Commission  
Horticulture Commission  
Advisory Commission on Pesticides  
Seed Commission  
Structural Pest Control Commission  
Sweet Potato Advertising and Development Commission

The mission of the Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences is to ensure that animal feeds, pet foods, fertilizers, agricultural liming materials and pesticides meet all requirements of law; to monitor, prevent, control and eradicate plant pests and diseases that threaten Louisiana's agriculture, environment and economy; to facilitate agricultural exports through certification of products; to oversee the qualifications and practices of persons engaged in the green industry; to protect human health and the environment by ensuring the proper labeling, distribution, storage, use, application and disposal of pesticides, and through enforcement of all pesticide laws; to ensure that seed sold for planting meets label guarantees and quality standards; and to ensure a safe, abundant supply of food and fiber.

The goals of the Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences are to: 1) assure, through sampling and inspection, that feed, fertilizer, lime, horticultural products, imported and exported agricultural products, pesticides, and seeds meet or exceed the quality standards set by federal and Louisiana laws, rules, and regulations; and 2) through licensing, certification, surveillance and training, assure a level of competency in services and products provided by

those industries regulated in an effort to protect the public and the environment.

The Office is administered by an Assistant Commissioner. Each Division is under the direction of a Division Director with programs administered by Directors and Assistant Directors. A statewide force of 47 agricultural environmental specialists, i.e., inspectors, carry out field inspections and investigations to ensure compliance with laws. These specialists are spread across the state in seven districts. These specialists are cross-trained in all Office programs to ensure proficiency in each area. Violators of regulations may be issued warnings or brought before a Commission to answer alleged violations.

A summary of the programs and services within the Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences is included herein.

## **HORTICULTURE AND QUARANTINE PROGRAMS DIVISION**

The Horticulture and Quarantine Programs Division is responsible for administering programs under the following legal citations:

1. Louisiana Horticulture Commission - R.S. 3:3801-3816;  
LAC 7XXIX.101-123
2. Crop Pests and Diseases Law R.S. 3:1651-1656
3. Sweet Potato Diseases Law R.S. 3:1731-1736
4. Sweet Potato Advertising and Promotion Law R.S. 3:1741-1748
5. Quarantine Regulations LAC 7XV.101-163
6. Louisiana Apiary Law R.S. 3:2301-2311;  
LAC 7XXI.2501-2521
7. Boll Weevil Eradication Law R.S. 3:1601-1617;  
LAC 7XV.301-327
8. USDA-APHIS-PPQ Cooperative Programs
  - a. Plant Protection Act - 7 U.S.C. 7701 et seq.
  - b. Federal Noxious Weed Act (in part) - 7 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.
  - c. Federal Regulations - 7 CFR 300-399

### **I. LOUISIANA HORTICULTURE COMMISSION**

The purpose of the Horticulture Commission is to protect the public and the environment of Louisiana by overseeing the qualifications and practices of persons engaged in the green industry through effective licensing, permitting, and enforcement activities. The Commission licenses individuals, through examination, who wish to provide professional services in the following areas: Landscape Architect, Landscape Horticulturist, Landscape Irrigation Contractor, Arborist, Utility Arborist, Retail Florist and Wholesale Florist. These are specialized areas in which the person must have a thorough knowledge in order to perform these services correctly. In addition to the above areas, the Commission also issues permits to those persons wishing to engage in the occupations of Nursery Stock Dealer and Cut Flower Dealer.

The Commission is authorized by law to govern the qualifications and practices of persons engaged in these professions and occupations, to hold hearings and conduct investigations, to do all things necessary to prevent fraudulent practices by these persons and to encourage these persons to participate in continuing education programs. We make routine inspections on the license and permit holders to check the quality of their services and products, including plant pest purposes. We investigate complaints of persons violating this law. Oftentimes we are called on to help settle disputes between consumers and the persons regulated. We hold hearings quarterly and assess penalties in connection with violations. We work closely with industry associations, which conduct meetings, seminars, workshops, etc. in an effort to keep these persons up-to-date with changes and advancements in these fields.

The activities of the Horticulture Commission partners with the activities of LDAF's Plant Pest Quarantine Programs by providing authority at the retail level in the surveillance of plant pests that could endanger Louisiana's agricultural (food and fiber supply), forestry, and



horticultural industries and the environment. Each state has some means of regulating plant pests through the movement of nursery stock. Since these plant materials are not consumed or processed in any manner, nursery stock provides an ideal environment for plant pests and diseases to survive and spread. The Horticulture Commission maintains a readily available list of all persons handling ornamental plant materials, should action be required to respond to the introduction of a detrimental plant pest.

The purpose of licensing, permitting and regulating persons in these areas is to ensure that the consumer receives a quality product and/or service. In many cases the services provided will have a long-term effect on properties involved, including the real estate value of that property.

#### LICENSES AND PERMITS ISSUED

<b>TYPE</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
*Landscape Contractor	1645	1677	1658	1732	N/A
*Horticulturist	1019	1031	996	1007	N/A
*Landscape Horticulturist	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2015
**Landscape Irrigation Contractor	N/A	9	193	224	257
Wholesale Florist	76	73	70	66	59
Retail Florist	2710	2611	2563	2576	2512
Arborist	484	500	557	596	600
Utility Arborist	160	150	148	152	162
Landscape Architect	362	376	378	395	367
Nursery Stock Dealer	1381	1363	1314	1369	1392
Cut Flower Dealer	1121	1096	1030	1012	993
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>8,958</b>	<b>8,886</b>	<b>8,907</b>	<b>9,129</b>	<b>8,357</b>

\*The 2008 legislative session combined landscape contractor and horticulturist licenses, thus eliminating 687 individuals who carried both and now need only one.

\*\*The 2004 legislative session passed a law requiring the licensing of landscape irrigation contractors. The first license was issued in 2005.

## ENFORCEMENT

Many investigations are conducted on complaints of persons violating this law. If there is evidence of a violation, a compliance order is issued to first-time offenders, which orders them to cease and desist or obtain a valid license or permit. Repeat offenders are called to an adjudicatory hearing before the Commission.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
NUMBER OF COMPLIANCE ORDERS	51	71	57	135	91
NUMBER OF CASES HEARD	11	13	14	15	20
FINES ASSESSED	\$5,500	\$12,500	\$8,750	\$11,250	\$20,875

## **II. QUARANTINE PROGRAMS**

The state quarantine programs are administered through the Crop Pests and Diseases Law (R.S. 3:1651-1655), the Sweet Potato Law (R.S. 3:1731-1736) and the Quarantine Regulations (LAC 7XV.101-165). The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry is the agency responsible for regulating plant pests. Such an agency exists in each state. Each State Plant Regulatory Agency is a member of a Regional Plant Board (in our case the Southern Plant Board), and a member of the National Plant Board. These Plant Boards provide a means for the states to come together, along with USDA, to discuss problems regarding plant pests and diseases. As a result, states recognize and honor the inspection and certification of regulated plant materials originating in another state. Certificates of inspection are reciprocated between states for the most part, thus permitting Louisiana products to move freely in commerce to other states, which is essential to any commercially-produced agricultural commodity.

Some of the major areas of involvement in this program are outlined below.

### **A. SWEET POTATO PROGRAM**

The purpose of the program is to prevent the spread of the sweet potato weevil to North Louisiana and to certify that all shipments of sweet potatoes from Louisiana are apparently free from sweet potato weevil, as required by other states. Louisiana is unique in that, unlike other sweet potato producing states, we have a large commercial industry in the sweet potato weevil-infested areas. Louisiana is currently the third largest sweet potato producing state in the nation behind North Carolina and Mississippi. In order to maintain this level of production, we must maintain available markets. Some states require that sweet potatoes are inspected and found apparently free from sweet potato weevil prior to shipment. Other states require that potatoes are grown in a weevil-free area. Therefore, it is important to maintain the weevil-free status of North Louisiana. The Sweet Potato Foundation Seed Program at the LSU Sweet Potato Research Station in Chase, Louisiana is also dependent on this program and the weevil-free status of North Louisiana. The surveillance and control program helps to reduce weevil populations and insures that potatoes sold in the marketplace are free from weevils, therefore high in quality for the consumer. Beginning with the 1995-96 season, a pheromone trapping program was implemented in our sweet potato weevil-free "green tag" area as a regulatory tool. Use of traps represented a distinct change in the way the sweet potato program was carried out

and in the way weevil distribution was determined and delineated in our green tag area. In 1997 we added GPS mapping technology to the program and began mapping all commercial sweet potato production fields and storage sheds in the green tag area. Then, beginning with the 2001growing season, GPS mapping and pheromone trapping were instituted statewide as the official method of inspection for weevils. Regulatory changes were codified in 2001 and policies were developed to assist in implementation. Those amended regulations and policies have remained in effect since 2001. In addition, a barcode system for monitoring traps was implemented in FY 2005-2006. In summary, the program is accomplished as follows:

**Statewide Program:** Visual ‘platform’ inspections for every load of potatoes shipped within or out of the state are no longer required. Instead, packers and shippers stamp each invoice/ bill of lading with a numbered stamp. Stamps serve as the ‘weevil permit.’ Placement of a tag in each container of sweet potatoes is still mandatory if required by the receiving state but tags no longer require a date stamp. Each grower is required to submit a listing of shed, seedbed and field locations to LDAF so these sites can be mapped and trapped. Traps are placed and checked throughout the season by LDAF inspectors according to a set protocol. All potatoes must be transported in a manner to prevent spillage. Cull potatoes must be disposed of in an appropriate manner.

**Sweet potato Weevil-Free “Green Tag” Area Program:** Only seed that originates in a weevil-free area may be used. No sweet potatoes will be allowed to be sold or utilized as deer feed or livestock feed. If sweet potato weevils are trapped on any field, that field and any other field within 300 yards will be declared “pink tag” and must follow the “pink tag” mandatory spray program. No planting will be allowed within 100 yards of a location where a sweet potato weevil was trapped during the previous season.

**Sweet potato Weevil-Infested “Pink Tag” Area Program:** Only properly treated seed or seed from weevil-free sources may be used. All growers must follow a mandatory weevil spray program in seedbeds and fields, designed by LSU. Spray records and pesticide purchase receipts must be kept and made available to LDAF personnel for review. No potatoes may be sold as feed. A grower may feed potatoes to cattle or hogs on his own property. (However, only chipped potatoes may be fed to hogs).

**Fees:** Each grower is required to pay a fee based on the commercial acres of sweet potatoes he/she grows as determined by GPS mapping. The Sweet Potato Commission establishes an average yield per acre each year. This yield multiplied by the acres determines the total bushel yield on which the fee is based. As of 2009, the assessment fee is 10-cents per bushel (6-cents for the quarantine program, 4-cents for advertising and promotion). Split invoices for fees are sent to growers for payment in October and December, with full payment required by December 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Sweet Potato Program Information By Fiscal Year**

<b>Category</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>
Sweet Potato Dealer Permits Issued	221	217	215	196	185
*Sweet Potato Regulatory Inspections Conducted	567	459	541	425	425
% Weevil-free Acres	67	73	72	68	67
% Weevil Damage to Potatoes Entering Processing Facilities	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
**Infested Properties	2	0	1	0	0

\* Seed bed and field destruction, spray record checks, market inspections, packing shed inspections, etc.

\*\* Number of properties in the weevil-free, “green-tag” area found to have weevils

**Sweet Potato Production (in total acres planted) By Crop Year**

<b>Category</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
# Acres Pink Tag Area	4875	4506	4536	4447	4317
# Acres Green Tag Area	10070	12021	11538	9306	8804
Total # Acres	14945	16527	16074	13753	13121

With the continued success of the Beauregard variety, and the addition of the new Evangeline variety, production is fairly steady in Louisiana. Growers continue to compete with other sweet potato production states for markets. However, after nearly a decade of inconsistent, adverse weather conditions, the past five growing seasons have recorded a notable decline in the number of growers and harvested acres. The LDAF program enables Louisiana sweet potatoes to move throughout the country, garnering a \$1 per box premium over other states. Recently, the state invested \$37 million in attracting ConAgra Lamb Weston to build a processing facility in our weevil-free area of Northeast Louisiana. LDAF program activity is an integral part of protecting that investment.

**B. NURSERY PROGRAM**

The purpose of the nursery inspection program is to control, eradicate, or prevent the introduction, spread, or dissemination of all injurious crop and fruit pests and diseases in agricultural commodities which move in interstate commerce. Nursery plants provide an ideal environment for plant pests and diseases to survive and spread. Since these plant materials are not consumed or processed in any manner, they are a primary source of transporting many of these pests.

In order for a nursery to ship plant materials in interstate commerce, the various states require that it be inspected and certified apparently free of injurious pests and diseases. This serves to prevent the spread of certain pests from Louisiana to other states. It also serves as the primary means to prevent the introduction and spread of plant pests and diseases from other states or countries into Louisiana. These plant pests can become very destructive and threaten the growth of the nursery industry within this state, which has an estimated value of approximately \$170 million in 2008.

Plant pests can also be detrimental to all aspects of agriculture and the environment and in some cases, a public nuisance. The program offers consumer protection in that the plant materials purchased are generally free from major pests and diseases, which adds to the life of the plants they purchase. The program also prevents the spread of these pests to other plants in the consumer landscape. On a larger scale, the program prevents Louisiana from becoming a “dumping ground” for poor quality, pest laden plant materials from which the consuming public and other Louisiana agricultural industries and the environment would otherwise have no protection.

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry also has a Cooperative Agreement with the USDA-APHIS-PPQ for the certification of nursery stock and other regulated articles for the imported fire ant. Louisiana is identified as generally infested with this pest and any regulated commodities moving in interstate commerce to areas free from the imported fire ant must be certified in accordance with current Federal imported fire ant quarantine guidelines. Providing current imported fire ant information, maintenance of a listing of active participants, monitoring treatments, soil sample collections, and record keeping are an important part of the certification process for those nurserymen desiring to ship their nursery stock into imported fire

ant free areas in the United States and other countries.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
# of Nurseries Permitted	872	852	785	760	736
# of Imported Fire Ant Inspections	223	193	Data unavailable	157	185

### C. CAPS (COOPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL PEST SURVEY PROGRAM)

The CAPS program began in 1982. Historically, CAPS has been a combined effort by federal and state agricultural organizations to collect and manage data on plant pests, weeds, and biological control agents. Survey targets have included weeds, nematodes, plant diseases, insects, snails, and other invertebrates. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine (USDA-APHIS-PPQ) has provided national and regional coordination and funding to supplement and enhance State pest survey and detection programs.

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) is the state plant regulatory agency and is charged with a plant pest prevention mission to protect the state's agriculture and environment from the damaging effects of plant pests. State plant regulatory agencies, as part of their operations, interface with USDA-APHIS-PPQ, to form a State/Federal partnership in many cooperative plant pest prevention and control programs. In addition to cooperating with USDA-APHIS-PPQ on pests of national importance, state plant regulatory agencies are responsible for conducting plant and plant product inspection and certification programs for commodities such as nursery stock and other state regulated agricultural articles. State plant pest regulatory agencies make plant pest observations and conduct state supported surveys as part of their responsibilities. The information collected by states during these surveys enhances the functionality of the CAPS program.

Multi-governmental agency and multi-disciplinary involvement have been achieved through state, regional, and national committees, and through state, regional, or national projects. In the past, many participants in this program were interested in monitoring endemic plant pests to determine first-of-season occurrences, economically important plant pest population levels, and other pest-related phenomena.

The three main responsibilities of USDA-APHIS-PPQ are:

1. To protect American agriculture and environment from foreign plant pest introductions and establishment ( CAPS Goal I - Early detection of exotic plant pests and weeds).
2. To conduct eradication or control programs as authorized by legislation or regulation (CAPS Goal II - Maintain a pest information database to support the cooperative management of PPQ program pests and biological control programs).
3. To facilitate international agricultural commerce (CAPS Goal III – Provide timely and accurate plant pest and weed distribution data to support export of U.S. agricultural products).

The current CAPS goals were developed to support PPQ efforts for fulfilling these responsibilities. The CAPS program assists USDA-APHIS-PPQ in meeting its three main responsibilities by supplying a means of detection, documentation, and rapid dissemination of information on surveys for plant pests and weeds in the United States. The program has also provided USDA-APHIS-PPQ and cooperators with geographic distribution information on endemic pests in the United States. This plant pest data has been used in negotiating phytosanitary agreements for international trade and making management, budgeting, and program decisions.

#### CAPS Goals

Goal I: Early detection of exotic plant pests and weeds.

CAPS cooperators will conduct directed detection surveys based on pest risk assessments for organisms that demonstrate a high risk of entering the United States and may have a high probability of becoming established and reaching significant pest status. Early pest detection is an important element of the safeguarding system to protect the Nation's agriculture, environment, natural resources, and economic well being from unintentional pest introductions as well as from bioterrorist attacks. It also serves as a component of the homeland security initiative. The program will ensure that an early detection of an exotic plant pest or weed results in rapid and appropriate actions. Components of an early detection program encompass such areas as analysis of interception data, taxonomic support, pest information, pest risk assessments, pathway analyses, offshore pest information, and risk mapping and guidelines for reporting new detections.

Goal II: Maintain a pest information database to support the cooperative management of PPQ program pests and biological control programs.

The program will enhance agricultural plant pest data collection and analysis to support the cooperative management of PPQ program pests, weeds, and biological control agents using the National Agricultural Pest Information System (NAPIS). Agricultural plant pest data collection and handling will be enhanced by providing training for cooperators; more sophisticated graphic representations of data, such as mapping; increased evaluation of data collection devices, such as personal digital assistants (PDA's); and global positioning system (GPS) units. Field personnel use those devices to collect and enter data into NAPIS, and by conducting additional data quality monitoring and linkages with other databases. CAPS personnel will conduct the evaluation of data collection devices in cooperation with PPQ's Center for Plant Health Science and Technology (CPHST). In the future, it may be necessary to obtain certain historical pest information in each State for use in risk based mapping and modeling programs for the National Pest Detection Programs. The CAPS community will also help provide biological information on specific pests, hosts, and beneficial organisms. This information may be used for developing plant pest management strategies, advisories, and activities which assist scientists, program managers, and agribusiness related entities to optimize economic return while minimizing environmental degradation, food safety risks, and other unwanted sociological and environmental consequences including bioterrorism and biosecurity concerns.

Goal III: Provide timely and accurate plant pest and weed distribution data to support export of U.S. agricultural products.

The CAPS Program will provide plant pest distribution data (presence/absence) to county level resolution. This data will support the development and/or expansion of specific export markets where export of agricultural products has been or may be impaired because of inadequate or inaccurate plant pest occurrence data (such as lack of demonstrated pest free zones).

#### Goal IV: Enhance CAPS communications network

CAPS, by its title, is a cooperative program requiring coordination and communication between many federal, regional, state, county, and private entities. Through the use of expanded cooperative agreements with various entities, CAPS will expand the communications network and scope of survey activities. The expanded scope will address unintentional pest introductions and bioterrorist threats. The individuals hired to fill PPQ's newly created Pest Survey Specialists (PSS) positions, working with the State Survey Coordinators (SSC's) and State CAPS Committees (SCC's), will facilitate survey coordination and enhance communication.

In 2002, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry established a Program Coordinator position (or SSC) to manage the CAPS program in Louisiana. This person is in charge of writing funding proposals for surveys, establishing the state CAPS committee and coordinating surveys if funding is approved. Since the induction of the CAPS program, LDAF has surveyed the state for numerous pests and has deemed this program as being vital to the future of agriculture and forestry. LSU AgCenter has also conducted surveys for LDAF through the CAPS program.

LDAF considers the state of Louisiana as being of "high risk" for new pest introductions. In a 2009 USDA analysis ranking the relative risk exotic pests pose to the 50 states, Louisiana was ranked ninth. Risk elements utilized in the rankings were: 1) Likelihood of introduction; 2) Economic impact; 3) Environmental Suitability; and 4) Natural Resource impact. This study clearly identifies the need for LDAF to conduct surveys for exotic pests. During the past 5 years LDAF has conducted many surveys for exotic pests. Some of the major surveys conducted by LDAF for exotic pests are: Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Sudden Oak Death, Apple Snail, Tropical Spider Wort, Sirex Wood Wasp, Emerald Ash Borer and Light Brown Apple Moth.

Pink Hibiscus Mealybug (PHMB) - this insect pest has hundreds of host plants including many crop species and ornamental plants with hibiscus being the preferred host. Survey work for this pest began in 2006 in response to a call from a homeowner located in Jefferson parish concerned about this new pest she found on her hibiscus plant. This prompted intensive survey work and initiated a bio-control program where LDAF released numerous parasitoid wasps to help combat this pest. USDA has been conducting studies to evaluate the bio-control project since the release of the parasitic wasps. Reduction in PHMB populations since 2006 appears to be ~70% - 80%. At this point, all wasps are performing as expected. LDAF and USDA will continue to monitor this data to determine if more wasp releases are necessary.

Sudden Oak Death (SOD) - SOD is a fungal pathogen that attacks dozens of species of trees and ornamental plants. It occurs on the West Coast in forested areas and has been found in nurseries so it can spread through infected nursery stock and soil. LDAF has been sampling for this pest since 2004 and has taken over 1600 samples from symptomatic host plants originating from infested areas. Samples are taken from wholesale and retail nursery locations throughout the state. LDAF performs traceforward and traceback inspections handed down from USDA-APHIS-PPQ on infected material. LDAF plans to continue surveying for this pest in the future to protect our valuable resources.

Apple Snail - These snails feed on aquatic plants, including ornamental pond plants and rice. In nature they are found in canals, bayous and other waterways and they may threaten waterways ecosystems. This pest has been found in 2006 in Jefferson Parish, 2008 in Terrebonne Parish and in 2009 in Lafayette Parish. All interceptions were determined to be from pet owners releasing them into the wild. LDAF has performed a visual survey for this pest in any waterway supplying or draining from rice production fields in 2007 and 2008. LDAF was not funded for this survey in 2009 but plans to continue the survey in the future to protect the rice industry.

Tropical Spider Wort (TSW) - TSW is an aggressive annual/perennial weed that is very difficult to control once established. It establishes in row crops such as cotton and peanuts

and other agronomic situations. LDAF has utilized its Boll Weevil Eradication Program employees to visually survey for this pest in 2007 and 2008 while they are in and around cotton fields. LDAF has 2 years of negative survey data for this pest and considers the state free from this pest at this time.

Sirex Wood Wasp – Sirex is a wood wasp pest of numerous pine tree species that can cause serious economic damage to the pine forest industry if established. They can spread naturally or through movement of infested wood packing material or cut wood. LDAF surveyed for this pest in 2008 by use of 30 Lindgren Funnel Traps deployed in pine forest. LDAF did not get funding from USDA to survey for this pest in 2009 but efforts are being made to survey in 2010.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) - EAB is a beetle pest that attacks ash trees. Louisiana has a considerable amount of ash trees. EAB occurs in the upper mid-west and is spread through infested firewood, nursery stock and natural migration. LDAF has conducted this national survey in 2008 and 2009 according to the national survey guidelines set forth by USDA-APHIS-PPQ. LDAF deploys 200 large purple prism traps for use in the survey for this pest. LDAF will continue this survey in 2010.

Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) - LBAM is a yellowish-brown moth with a broad host range of over 100 including vegetable plants, berries, fruit trees, and ornamentals. California is considered to be infested with LBAM and typical movement is through infested nursery stock. LDAF has conducted this survey in 2008 and 2009 according to the national survey guidelines set forth by USDA-APHIS-PPQ. LDAF deploys 350 Jackson traps at the major nursery stock dealer locations that may receive nursery stock from California. LDAF has not trapped this pest in the past 2 years. LDAF plans to continue this survey in 2010.

#### D. OTHER SELECTED STATE QUARANTINE PESTS OF CONCERN

1. Brown Garden Snail - This is a major pest of nurseries, vegetables, citrus, and other fruits. Louisiana currently has a quarantine against Arizona and California for this pest. California agriculture spends millions of dollars per year trying to control this pest and loses millions of dollars per year to damage. Louisiana received an average of 600-800 shipments of nursery stock and plant materials annually from California the past five years. Spot inspections are made on these shipments to insure that the certified materials are in fact snail-free. During three of the five years, several shipments infested with snails were received from California nurseries (and occasionally from Florida nurseries as well). Infested shipments were returned to the shipper or destroyed.

2. Citrus Pests – From FY 2004 – 2007 we continued to focus on protecting the Louisiana citrus industry from the introduction of damaging strains of the tristeza virus. Tristeza is a virus complex which affects citrus. There is no control for this disease. Any trees purchased from out of state must be certified free from tristeza through a budwood screening and certification program. Currently, there are a limited number of nurseries in California that can meet our regulatory requirements for commercial shipment. We have made follow-up inspections to insure that all trees shipped from California are from certified nurseries. Any trees found from uncertified sources are returned or destroyed. We continually monitor for movement of propagative citrus stock into Louisiana as a part of this program.

In FY 2008, two new citrus pests of quarantine concern were found in Louisiana: Asian citrus psyllid and citrus greening disease. Asian citrus psyllid is an exotic insect pest of citrus and related ornamentals. It causes limited damage but is capable of vectoring citrus greening, a devastating bacterial disease that destroys citrus trees. We partnered with USDA-APHIS-PPQ to conduct extensive surveillance throughout the southern portion of the state and determined that the psyllid was present in eight parishes while citrus greening was found in only two parishes. Five greening-infected trees from three residential properties were removed. Psyllid control recommendations were established through partnership with the LSU AgCenter.



Quarantines were implemented on citrus nursery stock to reduce the risk of spreading the insect and the disease.

3. Burrowing Nematode - Burrowing nematode is a pest which does not exist in Louisiana. Crops such as sugarcane, cotton, citrus, and various ornamental plant species are host materials for this pest. In 1997, burrowing nematode was intercepted at a nursery on plant material imported from other states or countries. The infestation was delineated, mitigated, and eradicated in the nursery. As a result, we have increased our monitoring efforts on shipments entering Louisiana from other areas which are infested.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
# Sites	118	121	114	105	91
# Samples	177	185	144	140	128

4. Japanese Beetle – This pest of ornamental plant stock is surveyed for and regulated according to a ‘Harmonization Plan’ among states. Annual pheromone trap surveys for this pest at selected nursery grower and nursery stock dealer locations statewide began in 1998. During the past five years we deployed ~ 140 traps annually and trapped a total of nine adult beetles at seven locations in five parishes. Evidence indicates these trap captures are all introductions on nursery stock from infested states and that no established population exists in Louisiana.

5. Mexican Rice Borer – This moth pest can attack sugarcane as well as rice. It is established in southern Texas and has been moving, through natural spread, toward Louisiana since the 1980s. Formal survey for this pest using pheromone traps began in 1999 and has been conducted annually in commercial sugarcane and rice fields throughout southwestern Louisiana. Between 30 and 40 traps have been deployed annually the past five years. In December 2008, two Mexican rice borer moths were trapped separately in two pheromone traps, located ~five and ~ten miles north of Vinton, Louisiana in Calcasieu parish, adjacent to rice fields. This is the first find of this pest in Louisiana. A delimiting survey to determine the distribution of the moth was designed for use in 2009.

6. Soybean Rust – This fungal disease of soybean and selected weeds was discovered in a soybean field on the LSU AgCenter Ben Hur farm in East Baton Rouge parish in November 2004. This was the first confirmation of the disease in the U.S. A joint LDAF-USDA Incident Command was established in response to the discovery. Subsequent confirmations were made in additional parishes and in surrounding states. It was determined that the organism arrived in the U.S. through natural means in wind currents. Because of the nature of this disease and its spread via wind-borne spores, no regulatory action was feasible.

7. Panicle Rice Mite – This tiny mite pest of rice was confirmed in a greenhouse in the LSU AgCenter Rice Research Station in Crowley, in Acadia parish in late summer 2007 and shortly thereafter was also confirmed in field plots and at least one commercial field ten miles away. (The mite was found in an East Texas rice seed facility one month earlier). This find represents the first officially-confirmed find of this mite in Louisiana. A partnership between LDAF and USDA allowed for joint surveillance for the mite in greenhouses, field plots and commercial fields the following year. While the mite was found in one greenhouse, no evidence was found that it overwintered successfully in the field. Regulatory action was not imposed following survey.

8. Sugarcane Pests – We continue to partner with the LSU AgCenter, USDA and the American Sugarcane League in updating our existing sugarcane movement policy. The most recent policy update was completed in late 2007. This policy specifies required treatments and

inspections for the importation of sugarcane material into Louisiana to protect against the potential introduction of pests of concern.

9. Solid Wood Packing Material Certificates – During FY 2004 through January 2006, we partnered with USDA to issue 400-600 pest-free certificates annually for movement of solid wood packing material associated with shipments of various goods to other countries. In 2006 USDA discontinued the requirement.

### III. BOLL WEEVIL ERADICATION PROGRAM

In 1992 the Boll Weevil Eradication Law (R.S. 3:1601-1617) was established, authorizing the creation of the Boll Weevil Eradication Commission and clearing the way for a grower referendum to fund such a program via grower assessments. Boll Weevil Regulations (LAC 7XV.301-325) were finalized in 1995. A statewide referendum in the spring of 1995 failed with 58% of the vote in favor. A two-thirds vote was required for passage. In the fall of 1996, producers in the Red River Eradication Zone passed a referendum with approximately 83% of the vote in favor. The program was initiated in the Red River area in August 1997 with diapause applications on approximately 70,000 acres of cotton. In the fall of 1998, producers in the Louisiana Eradication Zone (Northeast) passed a referendum with approximately 77% of the vote in favor. The program was initiated in the Louisiana Zone in August 1999 with diapause applications on approximately 543,000 acres of cotton. In March of 2001, producers in the Red River Zone passed a maintenance referendum with a 93% favorable vote. A maintenance referendum was conducted in September of 2003 in both the Red River and Louisiana Eradication Zones. The maintenance referendum passed with a 98% favorable vote in the Red River Zone and an 88% favorable vote in the Louisiana Zone. This is a continuing maintenance referendum where-by it is not required that the Boll Weevil Eradication Commission call another referendum. A call for another referendum vote can, however, be called by petition of 30% of the active cotton producers in a given year.

The program utilizes electronic technology in its daily operations. Fields are mapped using hand held GPS units and overlaid on a computerized mapping program. Aerial applicators are required to have DGPS systems with printout capabilities. Trappers record trap data with bar code readers and transmit the data electronically.

After enduring five hurricane events since 2005, the program is making significant progress. This year, the program monitored and surveyed 229,869 acres of cotton in the state. This acreage comprises all areas of cotton production within the state. The cotton growing parishes along the Red River (formerly the Red River Zone) remain free of boll weevils and continue to be monitored with in-field traps. Additionally, cotton harvesting equipment moving into Louisiana is inspected and phytosanitary certificates reviewed to ensure compliance with regulations to prevent boll weevil reintroduction by mechanical means. Based on survey data and program protocol, for crop year 2009, a cumulative total of 99,865 acres were treated for boll weevils in the northeast region of the state resulting in a 98% reduction in boll weevil population from the previous crop year.

#### Prior 5 Year Performance in Northeast LA (Louisiana Zone) Plus this Year Completion (2009) by crop Yr.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
% Cotton Acres Weevil Free	53%	60%	75%	70%	89%	99%
% Reduction in Boll Weevil Numbers	56%	(43%) Hurricanes	47%	(22%) Volunteer Cotton	84%	98%
# Boll Weevils Trapped	101,265	144,721	76,380	93,360	14,731	302

#### **IV. APIARY PROGRAM**

The purpose of the apiary program is to prevent the introduction and spread in the state of known contagious and infectious diseases and pests of honey bees. This is accomplished through a hive registration program, surveys, inspections, sampling, and control of pests of honey bees in apiaries. The program allows movement by qualified individuals, holding valid permits and certificates of inspection declaring the health status of the honey bees and/or other related regulated articles into, from, or within the state of Louisiana. Similar programs exist in every state within the United States and are utilized to assure health maintenance and to regulate movement by commercial queen producers, commercial package producers, commercial honey producers, commercial crop pollinators, hobby beekeepers, researchers, and any other related beekeeping activity involving the movement of live honey bees and/or related regulated articles.

Within the state of Louisiana the commercial queen and package honey bee industry has an estimated value of approximately \$100,000 annually. In 2008 the value of the commercial honey crop produced in Louisiana was placed at approximately \$2.8 million. The value of pollination, not yet fully explored in Louisiana, has been estimated at approximately \$400 million annually. Commercial pollination services are estimated to be approximately \$800,000 dollars in 2008.

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry has managed, through an effective apiary program, to identify the extent of serious pest problems affecting the apiary industry in this state. At the same time, we have provided beekeepers with needed information relative to the treatment of honey bee colonies with approved chemicals to minimize their annual colony losses and continue to produce a product that is safe for public consumption.

In 2005 Africanized honey bees (AHB) were trapped in a bait hive near Shreveport Louisiana. This discovery was the first of its kind in Louisiana and marked the beginning of the establishment of this bee in Louisiana. Since this first detection in 2005, AHB has been found in 7 more locations through out the state. In each instance the finds were reported to the media to notify the public locally that AHB had been found near their town or city. In 2008 the only major cities in Louisiana with out confirmed finds of AHB were Baton Rouge and Monroe. Because AHB has been detected in a majority of the state and is now considered to be established in Louisiana the trap line that has been run by LDAF for the past 15 years has been discontinued. This trap line was very labor intensive and for all practical purposes had run its course. The trap line was established to detect and monitor the movement of AHB across Louisiana, and alert the public when detected.

Even though the trap line will no longer be in operation, LDAF will begin monitoring queen producer operations for AHB to ensure that only those bees with desirable traits are sold to the public. This will be done by acquiring samples of bees from each producer and checking them for Africanization by using the Fast Africanized Bee Identification System (FABIS) method. This involves measuring the right forewing of 10-12 worker bees and taking the average length of the wing to determine the probability of the bees being African.

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Registered Beekeepers	277	366	384	370	345
Registered Apiaries	1357	1533	1617	1514	1417

Registered Colonies	36,649	37,873	40,635	36,852	34,285
Diseased Col. Destroyed	0	0	2	0	0
Honey Bee Bait Hive Collections	214	166	132	138	103
Africanized HB's Destroyed (Ships)	0	0	0	0	0

## V. USDA-APHIS-PPQ

The Horticulture and Quarantine Division partners with USDA in various plant pest programs. This involves the Imported Fire Ant, as mentioned previously, as well as other programs such as Gypsy Moth, Karnal Bunt of Wheat, Tropical Soda Apple, Federal Phytosanitary Certification, Permits to Move Live Plant Pests, Postentry Quarantines and Biotechnology Programs. These are usually accomplished through memorandums of understanding between the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry and USDA.

Many of these programs (Imported Fire Ant, Gypsy Moth, Citrus Canker, Karnal Bunt, Tropical Soda Apple, Pine Shoot Beetle, Aquatic Snails, Postentry, Phytosanitary Certification, etc.) involve annual surveillance work.

The Gypsy Moth program is a seasonal, cooperative trapping effort aimed at detecting this unwanted pest should it be introduced into the state. Statewide trap survey was conducted annually.

Citrus Canker - related inspections were conducted annually at retail and wholesale outlets, to confirm that citrus fruit entering Louisiana from regulated areas was properly certified. In 2006, all Florida citrus fruit was placed under federal quarantine and was prohibited entry into Louisiana. Our inspections have focused on Limited Permit fruit shipments since that time. Although a few instances have warranted return of fruit to origin and subsequent joint investigations with USDA, no actual disease was found.

Each year, we collected subsamples of the state's wheat crop and found no Karnal Bunt. This allowed for the free movement of Louisiana's crop to all markets available.

We also have conducted statewide surveys annually for Tropical Soda Apple (a Federal Noxious Weed). A total of 54 individual plants were found on small acreages and were destroyed during the five year period. In addition, three large acreages were found to be infested to a limited extent and plants present were destroyed. Sites were limited to a three-parish area. A 60-acre property found to be infested prior to this time remains under quarantine and continues to be monitored and treated.

Annual surveys also were conducted for Pine Shoot Beetle, a federal pest of pine trees that can be moved in cut Christmas trees. Between 100-150 inspections were conducted each year at retail Christmas tree outlets. No pest problems were found.

Federal Phytosanitary Certification is required on most plant products, including lumber, grains and seeds, being exported to other countries. Prior to the issuance of a certificate, an inspection must be carried out to insure that the product meets the requirements of the country of destination. Selected state inspectors in each district are cross-trained with USDA and are certified to issue Federal Phytosanitary Certificates. We issue 500-600 such certificates annually. A similar certification program is offered at the state level, using a state phytosanitary

certificate, for products shipped interstate, and we issue between 75-170 such certificates annually.

The Postentry Quarantine program is a cooperative program with USDA to hold and monitor foreign plant stock for potential plant pest problems over a two-year period. The state maintains full responsibility for this program through a Memorandum Of Understanding with USDA (as of 1994). Each year we have inspected and tracked postentry plant material at a limited number of nursery grower, research and homeowner locations. No exotic pest problems were found.

Dozens of permits to move live plant pests are issued annually by USDA for moving plant pest and disease organisms into Louisiana. We review and comment on each one, making regulatory recommendations. During the past two years, all reviews have been conducted electronically through the USDA 'E-Permits' system.

The Postentry Quarantine program is a cooperative program with USDA to hold and monitor foreign plant material as necessary. We also assist USDA in facility inspections as needed.

Biotechnology is an "umbrella" word referring to a rapidly changing segment of worldwide research, business and industry that applies various tools and techniques to living organisms and their life processes. Genetic engineering, a process by which blueprints for production of biological products can be transferred from one organism to another, is the basis for most biotechnology endeavors. The use of genetic engineering and biotechnology in agriculture has become a routine part of the agricultural landscape. Results of this work include better quality food crops, increased crop resistance to diseases and insects, better crop survival under poor weather conditions and a reduced reliance on agricultural pesticides.

As a regulatory agency, we became involved in oversight of biotechnology field tests in 1989. We believe it is our responsibility to encourage the beneficial changes biotechnology may provide while continuing to safeguard Louisiana's agriculture, environment and citizens.

The Federal government requires a permit for the movement or environmental release of certain genetically engineered organisms. We are required to review and comment on applications for such permits. Other movement and field release applications are approved through a federal "notification" procedure which relies on applicant compliance with set standards and reduced oversight. We also review these notifications and, on average, Louisiana receives ~30 such notifications annually. We have chosen to use the federal laws, rules and regulations already in place to regulate products of this technology. This approach eliminates duplication of federal/state efforts while ensuring adequate permit review, field inspection and local oversight. During the past two years, all reviews have been conducted electronically through the USDA 'E-Permits' system.

## **VI. SWEET POTATO ASVERTISING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

The Louisiana Sweet Potato Advertising and Development Commission is established in R.S. 3: 1743 for the purpose to expand the market and increase consumption of Louisiana sweet potatoes. The Commission maintained its office in Opelousas until July 20, 1996 at which time it was closed upon the retirement of its Executive Director and all administrative and program functions were transferred to the Office of Marketing in Baton Rouge. The Commissioner assigned administration and program responsibilities to the Assistant Commissioner. Recently, the Commission was placed within the Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

The Louisiana Sweet Potato Advertising and Development Commission is funded by an assessment of four (4) cents per bushel on sweet potatoes inspected for shipment to fresh market outlets and to processing plants, and on sweet potatoes produced out-of-state and moved into Louisiana for further processing; except that a ten (10) percent discount is allowed on all processing stock to compensate for waste. The assessment for fresh market sweet potatoes is imposed at the rate of seven (7) dollars/acre planted and is collected by the department from the

producer along with the fee collected in connection with inspections under the sweet potato weevil inspection program. The seven-(7) dollar/acre assessment is the equivalent of four (4) cents per bushel based upon average production of fresh market sweet potatoes. The assessment for processed sweet potatoes is collected from processing plants at the rate of four (4) cents/bushel for both in-state and out-of state sweet potatoes processed at the plants.

The advertising, promotion and research program of the Commission includes trade advertising in national trade publications, consumer advertising in national magazines, restaurant and food service advertising in national magazines, newspaper & radio advertising in numerous markets throughout the U.S., national promotion contests for canned and fresh market sweet potatoes and funding to the LSU Agricultural experiment Station for sweet potato research.

## **PESTICIDE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS DIVISION**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

*The Division of Pesticide and Environmental Programs* is administered under L.R.S. Title 3 Chapter 20 ( Pesticide Law), R.S. 40:608.3 and LAC Title 7 Parts XXIII, XXV, and XLIII. The Division participates in cooperative agreements with EPA, USDA and FDA pursuant to the Federal Insecticide Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) as amended; the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, (7 U.S.C. 136i-1); Section 713 of Title VII (General Provisions) of Division A of the Public Law 108-7; the Federal Food Drug and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.), and the Organic Food Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501). Programs concerned with pesticides often involve highly complex and technical issues. With this in mind, the Division recognizes that certain key strategic priorities are evident and that all of the Division's programs and activities need to support those priorities. Simply stated, the Division is responsible for protecting the health and safety, natural resources and general prosperity of the citizens of Louisiana when pesticide use is involved.

The long term goals for this division reflect these basic responsibilities and include:

- 1) Maintain a comprehensive program to protect the environment along with the health and general prosperity of Louisiana citizens by providing for the safe and proper distribution, use and management of pesticides; by facilitating the protection of natural resources and pollution prevention; and, by providing for effective control of pests.
- 2) Identify and reduce data gaps in order to improve our ability to measure the effect our programs have on the attainment of our environmental goals.
- 3) Address priority concerns and initiatives through participation in community based environmental protection and programs for pollution prevention and promotion of risk reduction/mitigation.

### **II. COMMISSIONS**

*The Louisiana Advisory Commission on Pesticides and the Structural Pest Control Commission* are two state commissions that oversee the activities of the Division. The purpose of the commissions is to license and/or permit and regulate persons engaged in pesticide application businesses. The Advisory Commission on Pesticides meets three times a year and the Structural Pest Control Commission meets at least quarterly. Members serving on these two commissions represent a diverse cross section composed of agricultural, environmental, regulatory, industry, public health and university interests. The Commissioner appoints the members from a list of candidates as specifically stated in the provisions of the state pesticide laws. The Commissioner's appointments are submitted to the Louisiana Senate for confirmation and the appointment is for a period corresponding with the Commissioner's term.

Both Commissions have the authority and responsibility to hold adjudicatory hearings and must follow the strict guidelines as provided for in the Louisiana Administrative Procedures Act. According to the Administrative Procedures Act, the charge letter from LDAF must contain the following information:

- 1) Date and place of the Commission hearing
- 2) Alleged pesticide violation(s)
- 3) Description of potential penalties that can be imposed by the Commission, and
- 4) The Rights of the accused

A hearing officer appointed by the Louisiana Attorney General presides over the commission hearings. After preponderance of the evidence presented by the Division's staff and the alleged offender, the Commission members will vote to either drop the charges or find the offender in violation. A violation can result in civil penalties of up to \$25,000 per violation. Furthermore, the Commission may place on probation, suspend or revoke any certification or license/permit issued by the Commission.

### **III. PESTICIDE ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAMS**

*Enforcement* is one of the many tools available to help achieve specific environmental outcomes that will protect Louisiana's natural resources and insure the health and safety of its citizens. The Division inspects its major sources of pesticide use regularly, and takes action to assure compliance when violations are found. Working with the individual sources as violations are discovered is a significant part of the work of the enforcement and compliance programs. In addition, addressing similar sources at the same time could provide an effective and efficient means to assure compliance. This approach will help the Division use its resources most effectively in determining causes of violations and in developing programs to achieve compliance while providing some equity among competing entities.

Violations of pesticide use and their effect on the environment occur in a variety of places and for a variety of reasons. The tool used to improve compliance should vary depending on the assessment of the reasons for the violations. For instance, where confusion over applicable regulations or methods of compliance is the reason, education efforts may be most effective. However, the Division recognizes that there are circumstances where prompt and vigorous enforcement is the most desirable way to convince violators of their responsibilities to protect Louisiana's environment and the health and safety of its citizens.

Enforcement activities include use and misuse investigations which deal with health related issues, crop damage complaints, unauthorized use of pesticides and pesticide related emergencies. Enforcement inspections include agriculture and non-agriculture use sites, experimental use, producer establishment, market place, certified applicators, pesticide dealers, import/export, structural pesticide use sites and worker protection.



#### **IV. PESTICIDE CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM**

*The strong educational component of the Division's activities is evidenced in the Pesticide Applicator Certification and Training Program.* All pesticide applicators who apply any pesticides for a fee or apply or supervise the application of any restricted use pesticides must be certified by LDAF. Certification shall be issued only after the applicant has satisfactorily passed an examination. Certifications are valid for three years and are renewed by the applicator attending a pesticide training seminar in the specific category for which recertification is sought. The Division presently certifies applicators as private applicators, pesticide salespersons, agricultural consultants and commercial applicators. Categories of certification for commercial applicators are available in agricultural pest control, forest pest control, ornamental and turf pest control, seed treatment, aquatic pest control, right-of-way pest control, public health, regulatory pest control, and demonstration and research pest control. These certified applicators are employed by businesses issued owner/operator licenses that allow them to do business as commercial applicators, Restricted Use Pesticide (RUP) dealers or agricultural consultants. Certified applicators applying pesticides in the category of structural pest control are employed by licensed applicators who have been issued a place of business permit.

#### **V. PESTICIDE REGISTRATION PROGRAM**

*Any pesticide sold, offered for sale or distributed in Louisiana must be registered annually with the Division.* The Division maintains a database of registered pesticides and keeps an up to date label file. Random inspections are conducted at RUP dealers, distributors and in the market place to locate unregistered pesticides, canceled or suspended pesticides misbranded and/or improperly packaged pesticides, and pesticides that are not suitable for sale or use.

The Division will continue to administer Emergency Exemptions (Section 18) and State Special Local Need Registrations (Section 24(c)). The Division, in cooperation with the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, prepares applications, submits these applications for EPA approval and monitors applications for compliance.

#### **VI. STRUCTURAL PEST CONTROL PROGRAM**

*The Division's Structural Pest Control Program* is operated under the authority of Part VII of the Louisiana Pesticide Law. The purpose of this program is to regulate the applications of pesticides in and around structures by pest control operators which are charging a fee for such services. Those applicators applying pesticides under the supervision of certified applicators are also registered under this program. The Division investigates all reports of complaints dealing with structural pest control applications in a timely manner. In addition, our inspectors routinely conduct inspections on illegal operators, applications, pre-treat jobs, minimum specifications for termite work and wood infestation reports.

#### **VII. WATER PROGRAMS**

*Water Program Goals* are to alleviate pesticides in the waters of Louisiana by minimizing, mitigating and preventing pesticide contaminations. The Division has established a water (surface and ground) sampling program for monitoring the presence of pesticides in water. The program also provides for determinations and assessments of levels of pesticides detected in relationship to relative standards. These determinations and assessments are used in determining actions and responses taken by the Division.

## **VIII. PESTICIDE WASTE PROGRAM**

*The Pesticide Waste Program* is a very successful and expanding program that protects the natural resources and health and safety of Louisiana's citizens. The program is responsible for handling pesticide residues and pesticides waste sites that are outside of use and application areas and provide for assessment, evaluation, determination and remediation actions.

## **IX. FOOD SAFETY PROGRAM**

*The Division has established a Food Safety Program* that establishes sampling procedures and monitoring for pesticide residues on Louisiana's raw agricultural products. An important aspect of this program is the availability of data on the "safety" of food produced on Louisiana's farms.

## **X. WORKER PROTECTION PROGRAM**

*The major focus of the Worker Protection Program* is to reduce risks of pesticide related illness and injury to agricultural employees involved in the production of agricultural plants. This includes employees that load, mix, or apply pesticides and those employees who may work in or near treated sites.

## **XI. ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION PROGRAM**

*The Endangered Species Protection Program* is focused on minimizing unnecessary impacts from pesticide applications on Louisiana's endangered species. The program takes a species approach encompassing a pesticide management plan that includes species profile, pesticide threshold levels that may affect the species that includes biological opinions and protection plans to mitigate potential pesticide risks to the species. The Division will continue to offer information concerning endangered species protection from pesticides on a routine basis.

## **XII. SCHOOL PESTICIDE SAFETY PROGRAM**

Schools are required to submit integrated pest management plans to the department and keep a written record of restricted use pesticides used to control pests- available for inspection.

## **XIII. ORGANIC CERTIFICATION**

In 2002 the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) adopted the National Organic Standards. The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) completed the USDA accreditation process in 2004. LDAF now certifies Organic Production/Processing/Handling entities within the state of Louisiana under the federal rule. The state organic rules and regulations were repealed at that time. The federal regulations and standards continue with strict prohibition against the use of synthetic pesticides, fertilizers or other additives on products being sold as "organic". LDAF certifies a host of Louisiana grown crops including fruits (blackberries, blueberries, & citrus); pasture and hay; nuts (pecans); vegetables; & herbs; and several livestock operations are currently certified producing organic milk and organic certified beef and lamb.

## **2006 - 2009 Pesticide and Environmental Programs Summary**

**1. No. of individuals licensed/certified in below listed categories 1 – 10. These are broken out into Agricultural (Ag.) and Non-Agricultural (NAg.) activities where these categories are generally found (note: one person may be lic./cert. in multiple categories)**

<b>Agricultural Use:</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>	<b>FY 2007</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>
(1) Ag Pest Control	1027	1011	1012	1008
(2) Forest Pest Control	256	264	292	288
(4) Seed Treatment	42	39	38	39
(10) Demonstration & Research Pest Control	659	641	635	620
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>1955</b>	<b>1977</b>	<b>1955</b>

<b>Non-Agricultural:</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>	<b>FY 2007</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>
(3) Ornamental & Turf Pest Control	737	754	781	758
(5) Aquatic Pest Control	562	589	597	647
(6) Right-of-Way Pest Control	1345	1383	1400	1434
(7a) Structural Pest Control	971	993	971	972
(7 b,c,d) Industrial, Institutional, Structural, Health Related Pest Control	508	462	463	452
(8) Public Health Pest Control	426	449	449	453
(9) Regulatory Pest Control	18	3	11	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4567</b>	<b>4633</b>	<b>4672</b>	<b>4727</b>

	<b>FY 2006</b>	<b>FY 2007</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>
<b>Private Applicators</b>	8244	8189	7809	7569
<b>Restricted Use Pesticide (RUP) Salesperson</b>	197	160	162	162
<b>Ag Consultant</b>	192	189	188	186

### **Inspections of entities under each broad category that use pesticides:**

Fiscal Year	Ag Use	Ag For Cause	NAg Use	NAg For Cause	Experimental Use Permit	Certified Applicator Records	Total
2006	375	132	1382	229	1	358	2477
2007	313	119	1682	241	2	548	2905
2008	370	161	1427	218	3	701	2880
2009	331	126	1383	244	4	710	2798

Use - (neutral scheme) routine compliance monitoring inspections of the use of pesticides related to: schools; agricultural production; worker safety; right of way maintenance; residential or commercial ornamental, turf and structural pest control.

For Cause - primarily initiated from complaints, other agency referrals or tips in relation to an alleged mis-use of a pesticide in any area.

**3. No. of pesticides registered in Louisiana:**

2006	11,600
2007	11,933
2008	12,376
2009	12,339

**4. Inspections of facilities producing, distributing and selling pesticides:**

Fiscal Year	Pesticide Producing Establishment	Pesticide Market Place	Pesticide Imports	Pesticide Exports	Restricted Use Pesticide (RUP) Dealers	Totals
2006	45	283	0	2	141	471
2007	51	434	5	1	148	639
2008	51	408	3	1	152	615
2009	44	323	0	0	190	557

## **SEED PROGRAMS DIVISION**

The Seed Programs Division is responsible for administering activities under the following legal citations:

- Louisiana Seed Law R.S. 3:1431-1449
- Seed Rules and Regulations LAC 7:101-121
- Louisiana Seed Certification Standards LAC 7:123-237
- USDA – Seed Regulatory and Testing Branch Cooperative Program
  - Federal Seed Act 7 U.S.C. 1551-1611
  - Federal Seed Act Regulations 7 CFR 201

The Seed Programs Division licenses an average of 800 Seed Dealers each year. AES field inspectors take an average of 3,915 regulatory samples, 293 certified samples and 1,334 service samples, for a total of 5,552 seed samples. The Louisiana State Seed Testing Laboratory performs approximately 11,000 tests on these samples (row crops, tree seed, wildlife mixtures, grass seeds for lawns and highway roadsides, vegetable seeds, wildflower seeds & etc.) There is an average of 182 Stop Orders placed on seed lots based on the test results of the regulatory samples. As the Seed Certification agency for the state, the program inspects an average of 16,612 acres of various crops (rice, sugarcane, sweet potatoes, small grains, turf grass & etc) to ensure that certain field and seed certification standards are met.

### **Identity and Description of the Sub-Units Involved in the Seed Program**

I. Boards and commissions created by statute and placed under the Department of Agriculture & Forestry through the Reorganization Act.

A. Louisiana Seed Commission – R.S. 3:1432-1433

1. Composed of the following members as required by Section 1432 of the Louisiana Seed Law:
  - Commissioner of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry
  - Director, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service
  - Director, Louisiana State University Agricultural Experiment Station
  - President, Louisiana Ag. Industries Association, Inc.
  - President, Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation
2. Powers, duties and functions of the Louisiana Seed Commission
  - (a) Make rules and regulations governing methods of sampling, inspecting, and making analysis tests and examinations of all seeds for sale.
  - (b) Establish standards and tolerances to be used in administering the Louisiana Seed Law.
  - (c) Make rules and regulations governing the conditions for growing, harvesting, processing, preparing for market, labeling, distributing, and marketing certified classes of seeds.

- (d) Establish minimum requirements of varietal purity and mechanical standards as a condition to the sale of certified classes of seeds.
- (e) Make rules and regulations establishing reasonable schedules of charges for testing seeds in the Louisiana Seed Testing Laboratory, for applications for sampling and field inspection for certification of seed crops, and for printing of certified seed tags.
- (f) Make all rules and regulations pertaining to the enforcement of the Louisiana Seed Law.
- (g) Limit sale and distribution of seeds to the certified classes only when the commission determines limitation will best serve the crop industry and farmers.
- (h) In making rules and regulations, give consideration to minimum requirements of varietal purity and mechanical standards, the kind, quality and estimated amounts of seed to be available for sale in Louisiana as compared with other states, the cultural and trade practices in other states with respect to offering and displaying for sale, labeling sampling and making analyses, and the general welfare of growers in Louisiana.

II. Program sub-units not restricted to functions associated with boards and/or commissions, but existing under statutory authority.

A. Seed Regulatory Program – R.S. 3:1431-1449

- (1) Powers, functions and duties of the Louisiana Seed Testing Laboratory as authorized by the Louisiana Seed Law, to be administered by a Director and Assistant Director, employed by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry.
  - (a) Inspect, test and make analyses of agricultural, vegetable and flower seeds transported, offered for sale, sold or distributed in Louisiana for planting purposes. The availability of high quality planting seed is extremely important to the agricultural industry and consumers planting seed. The determination of the quality being offered to users is a primary function of the laboratory.
  - (b) Ensure that seed for planting purposes offered to or obtained by the purchaser meet the labeling claims of the seller pertaining to germination, pure seed content, inert matter content, presence of other crop seeds, noxious and other weed seeds, that false or misleading advertisements pertaining thereto is not being conducted and that other requirements of the Louisiana Seed Law are met.
  - (c) Ensure that all classes of Louisiana certified seed meet the seed standards and requirements as established by the Louisiana Seed

Commission and the Louisiana Seed Law before being eligible for disposition as a class of Louisiana certified seed.

- (d) Offer to Louisiana farmers, seedsmen and other residents the services of testing for varietal and mechanical purity, germination and vigor level, thus providing information which may be used in making labeling, warehousing, planting and other decisions.
- (e) Register and issue licenses to seedsmen both in state and out of state who sell seed in Louisiana, excepting those exempted by the Louisiana Seed Law.
- (f) Issue Stop Sale notices covering seed which is in violation of the Seed Law and/or rules and regulations or when there is good reason to believe a seed lot is in violation of said Law and/or rules and regulations, and issue Stop Sale notices against any seed dealer who fails to comply with the registration and licensing requirements of the Seed Law.
- (g) Enforce other provisions of the Louisiana Seed Law and its pursuant rules and regulations.

#### B. Seed Certification Program – LAC 7:123-237

- (1) Functions and duties of the Louisiana Seed Certification Program as authorized by the Louisiana Seed Law.
  - (a) Make rules and regulations governing the conditions for growing, harvesting, processing, preparing for market, labeling, distributing, and marketing seeds and other propagating stock as certified, registered or foundation classes.
  - (b) Set forth in its rules, minimum requirements of varietal purity and mechanical standards as a condition to sale or distribute as certified, registered or foundation seeds or other propagating stock.
  - (c) Establish a reasonable fee schedule to be charged for making application for inspection and field inspection for certification of seed.
  - (d) Establish a reasonable certification fee schedule.
  - (e) Ensure that the certification standards comply with the Federal Seed Act, the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies minimum guidelines, and the scheme of the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development.

#### C. The basic objectives of these programs are to:

- (a) Provide vital functions for the Louisiana State University's Foundation Seed Program to exist. Together these two programs

provide the avenue for the release of new and improved certified crop varieties to Louisiana growers.

- (b) Eliminate seed lots which are unsuitable for planting purposes from seed trade channels.
- (c) Reduce the violations of the Louisiana Seed Law and/or Rules and Regulations.
- (d) Provide Certified and Service seed testing services and provide a reasonable fee schedule for these services.
- (e) Ensure truth-in-labeling and other required labeling requirements for seed offered for sale, sold, transported or distributed in Louisiana.
- (f) Ensure false or misleading advertising is not conducted on seed for sale or sold in Louisiana.
- (g) Ensure that Louisiana certified seed meets the required standards, and that those standards meet the needs of consumers in Louisiana; and that the use of high quality certified seed is encouraged.
- (h) Provide the essential service of germination testing and purity analysis to farmers, seedsmen and other Louisiana residents for use as guides in labeling, planting, warehousing and other operations.
- (i) Provide reliable vigor tests of certain crop kinds as an aid to farmers and seedsmen in farm, warehouse and merchandising management.
- (j) Protect the seed industry and Louisiana's food supply through the early detection and prevention of the introduction of genetically modified (GM) seed traits in important economic crops.
- (k) Provide analysis reports to contractors and farmers as required by the Louisiana Department of Transportations and Development (DOTD) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) for reimbursement payments.

D. In order to accomplish the above objectives the following activities are carried out:

- (a) Collection of samples by department inspectors from seed being offered for sale to be checked in the state seed testing laboratory for compliance with law and regulations.
- (b) Inspection of fields by department inspectors to determine if requirements are met as set forth in the Louisiana Seed Certification Standards.



- (c) Collection of samples of seed by department inspectors and testing in the laboratory to determine their eligibility for certification, if said seed have met all requirements prior to sampling.

## **AGRICULTURAL CHEMISTRY PROGRAMS DIVISION**

### **Introduction**

The Agricultural Chemistry Programs Division is responsible for administering the state laws which regulate the manufacturing and sales of animal feeds, plant food, and agricultural liming materials.

The Agricultural Chemistry Laboratory provides analytical services required by the feed, fertilizer and lime regulatory programs. The lab also supports other programs in the Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences as well as other offices within the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry when requested to do so.

Through a cooperative agreement with the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, Agricultural Chemistry provides analytical services to the Louisiana State University Agricultural Experiment Station and to the Louisiana State University Cooperative Extension Service.

In October 2009, the Agricultural Chemistry Laboratory became a member of the Food Emergency Response Network (FERN). The Agricultural Chemistry Lab is one of three FERN member labs in Louisiana. The FERN system, a network of federal, state and local food-testing labs, was created to enable officials to quickly respond to emergencies involving biological, chemical, or radiological contamination of food.

### **Animal Feeds**

Agricultural Chemistry administers LRS Title 3, Chapter 14, Sections 1891-1907, which regulates the manufacturing and sales of animal feeds. All manufacturers are required to register with the Agricultural Chemistry office and pay a registration fee, label fee, and tonnage fee on their sales.

Samples are randomly taken by inspectors across the state. These samples are analyzed in the laboratory to identify deleterious substances, if present, and to determine if the feeds meet label guarantees. If samples are deficient, the manufacturer is assessed a penalty which is paid to the consumer if that person is known and can be located. If the consumer is not known, the penalty is paid to the state.

Repeated violations by manufacturers can result in withdrawal of the product from the marketplace and/or additional penalties.

The Feed Commission adjudicates violations of the Feed Law and imposes penalties when violations are found.

### **Plant Food**

Agricultural Chemistry administers LRS Title 3, Chapter 10, Part I, Sections 1311-1318, which regulates the manufacturing and sales of plant food. All manufacturers are required to register their company with the Agricultural Chemistry office and to pay a tonnage fee on their sales.

Samples are randomly taken by inspectors across the state. These samples are analyzed in the laboratory to identify deleterious substances, if present, and to determine if the plant foods meet label guarantees. If samples are deficient, the manufacturer is assessed a penalty which is paid to the consumer if that person is known and can be located. If the consumer is not known, the

penalty is paid to the state.

Repeated violations by manufacturers can result in withdrawal of the product from the marketplace and/or additional penalties.

The Fertilizer Commission adjudicates violations of the Fertilizer Law and imposes penalties when violations are found.

### **Agricultural Liming Materials**

Agricultural Chemistry administers LRS Title 3, Chapter 10, Part III, Sections 1361-1373, which regulates the sale and distribution of materials used to reduce the acidity of agricultural soils. Basic suppliers of agricultural liming materials are required to register with the Agricultural Chemistry office and pay a tonnage fee on their sales. Samples are randomly taken by inspectors and these are analyzed to determine if the specifications set forth in the Act are met. If samples are found to be deficient, a penalty is assessed against the supplier, and this amount is paid to the consumer if the consumer is known, otherwise the penalty is paid to the state.

In the event that a supplier wishes to offer an industrial by-product as an agricultural liming material, the supplier must furnish the Agricultural Chemistry office with an elemental analysis and a calcium carbonate equivalence value to show that the product is not deleterious to plants, is environmentally safe, and that it is suitable as a liming material. Any by-products must be approved by Agricultural Chemistry and a soil fertility specialist from the Louisiana State University Cooperative Extension Service before they can be registered.

### **Support for Pesticide and Environmental Program**

Agricultural Chemistry provides chemical analyses of pesticide formulations and pesticide residues.

Formulations' samples include those taken from producers, retail outlets, agricultural and non-agricultural users, and chemicals used in structural pest control.

Materials analyzed for pesticide residues include soil, water, animal feeds, food, seafood, air, plant and animal tissues, articles of clothing, household articles, food containers, and swab samples taken from inside dwellings, and swabs from other objects too large to bring into the laboratory, such as automobiles, buildings, furniture, etc.

Enforcement of pesticide laws is highly dependent upon chemical analyses provided by Agricultural Chemistry.

### **Support of Meat Inspection Program**

Agricultural Chemistry supports the LDAF/USDA Meat Inspection Program. Space and supervision are provided in the laboratory for chemical analyses of meat samples. The laboratory is a USDA certified laboratory.

### **Support of Department of Agriculture and Forestry Offices and Programs**

Agricultural Chemistry provides chemical analyses for other Offices of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry upon request.

## **Cooperation between Agricultural Chemistry and Louisiana State University Agriculture Center**

Agricultural Chemistry provides analytical support for research projects carried out by the Louisiana State University Agricultural Experiment Station. Departments in the Louisiana State University Experiment Station which Agricultural Chemistry has provided research support for include: Agricultural Engineering, Agronomy, Animal Science, Aquaculture, Audubon Sugar, Dairy Science, Entomology, Food Science, Horticulture, Human Ecology, Plant Pathology, Poultry Science and Renewable Natural Resources. This cooperative research has been carried out with scientists in Baton Rouge and with those located in branch stations around the state.

Analyses are also provided to support work carried out by the Louisiana State University Cooperative Extension Service. The samples may come from specialists in Baton Rouge or from agents in the parishes.

Analyses for the Agricultural Center are related to animal feeds, forage, food, fertilizers, soils, water, pesticide formulations, pesticide residues, mycotoxins, plant and animal tissues, raw agricultural products, and environmental monitoring.

### **Analyses for the General Public**

Agricultural Chemistry will analyze samples for farmers, home owners, agribusiness, and other individuals for a fee. The fees are structured so that they cover the cost of the analysis.

**ANALYSIS OF OFFICAL FERTILIZER SAMPLES**

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Samples Tested</u>	<u>% Deficient</u>
2003-04	1598	4%
2004-05	1513	4%
2005-06	1063	3%
2006-07	1438	2%
2007-08	1132	3%
2008-09	1046	4%

**ANALYSIS OF OFFICIAL FEED AND PET FOOD SAMPLES**

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Samples Tested</u>	<u>% Deficient</u>
2003-04	4451	4%
2004-05	4422	4%
2005-06	2818	3%
2006-07	4073	2%
2007-08	3284	3%
2008-09	3392	4%

**PENALTIES PAID TO FARMERS AND TO THE STATE  
FOR DEFICIENT FEED, PETFOOD AND FERTILIZER SAMPLES**

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Farmer</u>	<u>State</u>
2003-04	\$21,481	\$8,649
2004-05	\$21,195	\$7,120
2005-06	\$8,880	\$8,337
2006-07	\$16,651	\$9,208
2007-08	\$60,670	\$8,019
2008-09	\$17,092	\$7,919

**FEED, PETFOOD AND FERTILIZER TONNAGE SOLD  
FISCAL YEARS 2003-04 THRU 2008-09**

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Feed</u>	<u>Pet Food</u>	<u>Fertilizer</u>
2003-04	623,396	137,670	753,667
2004-05	715,591	146,842	855,754
2005-06	789,126	129,529	700,331
2006-07	735,338	132,971	778,537
2007-08	765,282	150,627	885,950
2008-09	762,536	123,038	706,381

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AND FORESTRY**

**OFFICE OF AGRICULTURAL AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES**

### Program Description:

The Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences administers the provisions of law relating to fertilizers, agricultural liming materials, boll weevil eradication, sweet potato diseases, crop pests and diseases, seeds, feeds, pesticides, horticulture, and apiaries. Statutes administered by the Office include R.S. 3:16, 1024 and 1025, 1311-1319, 1361-1373, 1431-1449, 1601-1617, 1651-1656, 1731-1736, 1741-1748, 1771-1775, 1891-1907, 2301-2311, 3201-3391.13, 3801-3816; R.S. 36:621 and 628; and R.S. 40:608.3. The Office receives its authority under R.S. 36:628(C). The Office is comprised of four divisions: Agricultural Chemistry Programs, Horticulture and Quarantine Programs, Pesticide and Environmental Programs, and Seed Programs. The FY 10 budget for the Office is \$24,352,945.

The Horticulture & Quarantine Programs Division monitors for and provides for the prevention, control, and eradication of regulated and exotic crop pests or diseases endangering Louisiana's agricultural (food and fiber), forestry, horticultural, and apiary industries and the environment; ensures that products certified for export from Louisiana are free from regulated pests; and oversees the qualifications and practices of persons engaged in the green industry. This Division licenses and permits horticulture related businesses, and inspects, samples, surveys, monitors, and oversees eradication/management efforts for plant pests, including boll weevil. These activities are accomplished through the implementation and enforcement of the Horticulture Law, Boll Weevil Eradication Law, Crop Pests and Diseases Law, Sweet Potato Diseases Law and Apiary Law. Additionally, this Division partners with USDA and the LSU AgCenter for many of its quarantine or regulated pest activities, safeguarding agriculture and the environment for Louisiana stakeholders with the greatest efficiency and effectiveness possible.

The Pesticide and Environmental Programs Division inspects, enforces and regulates the registration, distribution, sale, offering for sale, and application of pesticides. The Division regulates, trains and certifies Private and Commercial Pesticide Applicators, Structural Pest Control Applicators, Restricted Use Pesticide (RUP) Salespersons, Agricultural Consultants, and Worker Protection Standards (WPS) Trainers, as well as regulates and licenses or permits respective businesses. The Division also monitors the state's water resources for pesticides and participates in affiliated federal programs such as Endangered Species, USDA Food Safety, and USDA Organic Certification.

The Seed Programs Division is charged with ensuring that seed sold for planting purposes meets seed label guarantees and quality standards. In doing so, it prevents Louisiana from becoming a dumping ground for low quality planting seed and ensures that a mechanism is in place to provide a reliable source of high quality seed from superior new crop varieties for Louisiana producers. The responsibilities of the Seed Programs Division are: 1) Enforcement of the Seed Laws and Regulations; 2) Management of the Seed Certification Program; and 3) Operation of the Official State Seed Testing Laboratory.

The Agricultural Chemistry Programs Division is responsible for administering state laws and regulations which regulate the manufacturing and sale of animal feeds, pet foods, fertilizers and agricultural liming materials for the purpose of ensuring that the products meet the standards outlined in state and federal law and to ensure that those products do not endanger the environment or public health. The Agricultural Chemistry Laboratory is responsible for analyzing agricultural chemicals and other farm input components as part of regulatory enforcement of feed, fertilizers, and agricultural lime. It is the testing laboratory for the Division of Pesticide and Environmental Programs, providing analysis in the enforcement of the Pesticide Law. Agricultural Chemistry also provides analytical support for the Office of Animal Health Services, the LSU AgCenter and the general public.



A statewide force of 47 agricultural environmental specialists, i.e., inspectors, carry out field inspections and investigations to ensure compliance with laws and are spread across the state in seven districts. These specialists are cross-trained in all Office programs to ensure proficiency in each area. Violators of regulations may be issued warnings or brought before a commission to answer alleged violations.

#### Mission:

The mission of the Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences is to ensure that animal feeds, pet foods, fertilizers, agricultural liming materials and pesticides meet all requirements of law; to monitor, prevent, control and eradicate plant pests and diseases that threaten Louisiana's agriculture, environment and economy; to facilitate agricultural exports through certification of products; to oversee the qualifications and practices of persons engaged in the green industry; to protect human health and the environment by ensuring the proper labeling, distribution, storage, use, application and disposal of pesticides, and through enforcement of all pesticide laws; to ensure that seed sold for planting meets label guarantees and quality standards; and to ensure a safe, abundant supply of food and fiber.

#### Goals:

The goals of the Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences are to: 1) assure, through sampling and inspection, that feed, fertilizer, lime, horticultural products, imported and exported agricultural products, pesticides, and seeds meet or exceed the quality standards set by federal and Louisiana laws, rules, and regulations; and 2) through licensing, certification, surveillance and training, assure a level of competency in services and products provided by those industries regulated in an effort to protect the public and the environment.

### **OBJECTIVE I**

The Horticulture & Quarantine Programs Division will continue to monitor for and provide for the prevention, control, and eradication of regulated and exotic crop pests or diseases endangering Louisiana's agricultural (food and fiber), forestry, horticultural, and apiary industries and the environment; ensure that products certified for export from Louisiana are free from regulated pests; and oversee the qualifications and practices of persons engaged in the green industry. This Division licenses and permits horticulture related businesses, and inspects, samples, surveys, monitors, and oversees eradication efforts for plant pests, including boll weevil. These activities are accomplished through the implementation and enforcement of the Horticulture Law (R.S. 3:3801-3816; LAC 7:XXIX.101-123), Boll Weevil Eradication Law (R.S. 3:1601-1617; LAC 7:XV.301-327), Crop Pests and Diseases Law; Sweet Potato Law (R.S. 3:1651-1656; R.S. 3:1731-1736; LAC 7:XV.101-163) and Apiary Law (R.S. 3:2301-2311; LAC 7:XXI.2501-2521). Additionally, this Division partners with USDA and the LSU AgCenter for many of its quarantine or regulated pest activities, safeguarding agriculture and the environment for Louisiana stakeholders with the greatest efficiency and effectiveness possible.

#### **STRATEGY 1.1**

Protect the public and the environment of Louisiana by overseeing the qualifications and practices of persons engaged in the green industry through effective licensing, permitting, and enforcement activities.

- < Administer and grade examinations in the following professions: Landscape Architect, Landscape Horticulturist, Landscape Irrigation Contractor, Arborist, Utility Arborist, Retail Florist, and Wholesale Florist.
- < Process applications and issue licenses in the above professions and permits in the occupations of Nursery Stock Dealer and Cut Flower Dealer for those persons eligible.
- < Investigate complaints of violations.
- < Conduct adjudicatory hearings of possible violators.

## **STRATEGY 1.2**

Safeguard against the introduction and spread of plant pests into Louisiana's agricultural and forestry industries and the environment, to sustain and enhance protection of our food supply and our 'green industry' economies, and to enable and increase the exportation of Louisiana agricultural products, by conducting effective surveillance (inspections, sampling, surveying, monitoring) and eradication/management efforts for plant and honeybee pests and ensuring that materials are free from injurious pests and diseases.

- < Inspect, sample, and certify nurseries for pest freedom to allow for shipment of products.
- < Inspect, survey, and monitor for sweet potato weevil to manage populations and prevent spread to weevil free areas and to other states.
- < Inspect, sample, and certify agricultural commodities to ensure pest freedom for export to other states and countries.
- < Conduct effective postentry inspections of commodities entering Louisiana to ensure freedom of plant pests of quarantine concern.
- < Conduct effective surveys for plant pests currently not known to exist in Louisiana and eradicate or manage any that may be detected.
- < Review applications and provide regulatory oversight of permits for field testing of genetically engineered crops.
- < Provide for the registration of beekeepers and their colonies.
- < Perform effective inspections and certification of honeybees for interstate movement.
- < Provide regulatory oversight for the importation of honeybees into the U.S. through Louisiana for research purposes.

### STRATEGY 1.3

Conduct an effective boll weevil eradication program in the state.

- < Effectively survey and monitor all acres of cotton in the State for boll weevils.
- < Effectively treat all acres of cotton that are infested in the State.
- < Utilize available technologies and Best Management Practices to conduct eradication activities efficiently.
- < Complete eradication of the Boll Weevil within the entire state of Louisiana.
- < Upon completion continue survey and monitoring activities to prevent reintroduction.

### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

#### < Horticulture Commission:

- Percent of Horticulture non-compliance notices resulting in a hearing
- Horticulture notices of non-compliance issued
- Adjudicatory cases heard
- Number of Horticulture professional licensing exams administered
- Number of Horticulture professional licenses issued
- Number of Horticulture occupational permits issued

#### < Plant Pest Quarantine Programs

- Number of nursery shipping tags issued
- Inspections for Imported Fire Ant certification
- Nursery certificate permits issued
- Surveys completed for non-indigenous pests
- Phytosanitary export certificates issued
- Plant pest quarantine related investigations
- Post entry quarantine inspections
- Plant pest quarantine related compliance inspections
- Transgenic crop applications processed
- Transgenic crop field trials inspected
- Percent weevil damage to sweet potatoes entering processing facilities
- Percent sweet potato acres weevil free
- Sweet Potato weevils detected in weevil-free areas
- Sweet potato regulatory inspections
- Sweet potato dealer permits issued
- Honeybee shipments certified for out of state movement
- Queen and package honeybee producers certified
- Beekeepers registered

#### < Boll Weevil Program:

- Percentage of Cotton Acres Weevil Free
- Percent Reduction in Boll Weevil Numbers
- Cotton Boll Weevils Trapped

Customers: the general population of Louisiana.

Limiting Factors: funding, shortage of inspectors.

## **OBJECTIVE II**

The Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Pesticide and Environmental Programs Division will continue to protect the environment along with the health and general prosperity of Louisiana's citizens by providing for the safe and proper distribution, use and management of pesticides; by facilitating the protection of natural resources and pollution prevention; and by providing for effective control of pests. This program will address complaints, priority concerns, and initiatives through participation in community based environmental protection in addition to developing programs for pollution prevention and promotion of risk reduction/mitigation. The Division is administered under L.R.S. Title 3 Chapter 20 ( Pesticide Law), R.S. 40:608.3, and under LAC Title 7 Parts XXIII and XXV. The Division participates in cooperative agreements with EPA, USDA and FDA pursuant to the Federal Insecticide Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) as amended; the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, (7 U.S.C. 136i-1); Section 713 of Title VII (General Provisions) of Division A of the Public Law 108-7; and the Federal Food Drug and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.).

### **STRATEGY 2.1**

Maintain procedures for registration of any pesticide sold, offered for sale or distributed in Louisiana.

- < Maintain current database of registered pesticides with copy of labels and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) available via computer access.
- < Develop computer technology involving web access to AES registrants licensed certification credentials.
- < Conduct random inspections on dealers, distributors and in the market place to locate unregistered pesticides, canceled or suspended pesticides, misbranded and/or pesticides that are not suitable for sale or use.
- < Administer Emergency Exemptions (Section 18's) and State Special Local Need Registrations (Section 24c).

### **STRATEGY 2.2**

Provide for enforcement of and compliance with the Louisiana Pesticide Law and the Louisiana Structural Pest Control Law.

- < Maintain inspector staff thoroughly trained in techniques of investigating possible violations.
- < Investigate all reports of complaints dealing with pesticides in a timely fashion.
- < Perform routine inspections on sources of pesticide use and take action to assure compliance when violations are noted.

### **STRATEGY 2.3**

Provide for certification and training for all pesticide applicators that apply any pesticide for a fee or apply or supervise the application of any restricted use pesticide.

- < Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center Cooperative Extension Service to provide for the education and training of pesticide applicators.

- < Require that certification shall be issued only after the applicant has satisfactorily passed an examination.
- < Perform routine inspections at certifications/recertification meetings to assure that minimum standards of education are met.
- < Maintain a database of all certified pesticide applicators.

#### **STRATEGY 2.4**

Provide for licensing of businesses engaged in the application of pesticides.

- < Review applications for licenses to assure compliance with the requirements for licensing.
- < Perform routine inspections of businesses applying pesticide to assure compliance.
- < Maintain a database of all businesses licensed under the Louisiana Pesticide Law or the Louisiana Structural pest Control Law.

#### **STRATEGY 2.5**

Provide clean and safe water in Louisiana by minimizing, mitigating and preventing pesticide contamination.

- < Maintain a water (surface and ground) sampling program for monitoring the presence of pesticides in water.
- < Provide for determinations and assessments of levels of pesticides detected and determine actions and responses to such detections.

#### **STRATEGY 2.6**

Provide for the determination and remedial actions in order to protect health and the environment from pesticide waste.

- < Perform investigations of any circumstances relating to the presence of pesticide waste in the state that poses a threat of reasonable expectation of a threat to health or the environment.
- < Perform evaluations of pesticide waste sites and make determinations of remedial actions.

#### **STRATEGY 2.7**

Provide Louisiana citizens with clean and safe supply of raw agricultural products where pesticides are used.

- < Maintain sampling procedures on Louisiana's raw agricultural products for monitoring of pesticide residues in our food safety sampling program.
- < Make determinations for remedial action if pesticide residues are detected above the standards established.

#### **STRATEGY 2.8**

Provide for the protection of Louisiana's agricultural workers from exposure to pesticides.

- < Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center Cooperative Extension Service to provide for the education and training of agricultural employers and

workers on how to protect themselves from pesticide exposure.

- < Maintain a database of all workers and handlers that have received education and training.
- < Perform routine inspections of agricultural facilities to assure compliance with the Worker Protection Standards.

#### **STRATEGY 2.9**

Provide for minimizing adverse effects of pesticide applications on Louisiana's endangered species.

- < Continue to develop a pesticide management plan to mitigate potential pesticide risks to the species.

#### **STRATEGY 2.10**

Provide that Louisiana citizens purchasing organic food are getting certified organic food.

- < Perform routine sampling and monitoring to assure compliance with regulations and standards established for products being sold as organic.
- < Maintain standards to continue to have an approved Organic certification program in our state.

#### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

Number of verified environmental incidences by improper pesticide application

Number of pesticide complaints.

Number of inspections

Number of residue samples analyzed

Pesticide products out of compliance

Number of pesticides registered.

Number of pesticide product formulations analyzed.

Number of marketplace inspections.

Number of dealer inspections.

Number of producer establishments inspections

Enforcement actions on products

Applicators out of compliance

Number of certified applicators

Number of un-certified applicators

Health related complaints confirmed

Health related incidents reported\inspected

Customers: farmers, growers, applicators and Louisiana citizens

Limiting Factors: funding, shortage of inspectors

### **OBJECTIVE III**

The Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Agricultural Chemistry Programs Division will regulate the sale and use of animal feeds, pet foods, fertilizers, and agricultural liming materials; ensure that these products meet standards set forth by the Association of American Feed Control Officials, the Association of American Plant Food Control Officials, the Federal Food and Drug Administration and the State of Louisiana as provided for in LRS Title 3, Chapter 14, Sections 1891-1907; LRS Title 3, Chapter 10, Sections 1311-1318; LRS Title 3, Chapter 10, Sections 1361-1373; and

provide analytical services for the Pesticide and Environmental Program and the LSU AgCenter.

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>STRATEGY 3.1</b> | Inspect the manufacturing sites and retail outlets where these products are produced or housed to ensure good manufacturing practices, proper storage, and correct labeling. |
| <b>STRATEGY 3.2</b> | Take samples of the products and submit them to the laboratory for chemical analyses to ensure quality and safety and ensure that they meet label guarantees.                |
| <b>STRATEGY 3.3</b> | Investigate consumer complaints related to alleged problems arising from the use of these products.  |
| <b>STRATEGY 3.4</b> | Work closely with manufacturers to reduce deficiencies and ensure that products do not harm crops, animals, humans or the environment.                                       |
| <b>STRATEGY 3.5</b> | Maintain records of registration of products, inspections, analyses, and all other pertinent data.   |
| <b>STRATEGY 3.6</b> | Provide analyses of pesticide formulation samples and samples for pesticide residue for the purpose of enforcement of the Louisiana Pesticide Law.                           |
| <b>STRATEGY 3.7</b> | Provide analyses for research scientists in the L.S.U. Agricultural Experimental Station.  |

**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:**

Percentage of feed sold that meets guarantees and standards.

Percentage of fertilizer and lime sold that meets guarantees and standards.

Dollar amount of penalties paid to farmers.

Dollar amount of penalties paid to state.

Total tons of feed tested.

Total tons of fertilizer and agricultural lime tested.

Number of regulatory feed samples.

Number of regulatory fertilizer and agricultural lime samples.

Customers: farmers, Louisiana citizens

Limiting Factors: funding, shortage of field inspectors and laboratory personnel

**OBJECTIVE IV**

The Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Seed Programs Division, which is authorized under R. S. 3:1431-1447, will continue to prevent Louisiana from becoming a dumping ground for low quality seeds by making sure seed being offered for sale meets quality standards and truth-in-labeling requirements. This program also administers the Seed Certification Program that ensures a mechanism is in place to provide a reliable source of high quality seed from superior new crop varieties for Louisiana producers. The state seed testing

laboratory is the only seed testing and certification facility available to farmers and consumers in the state. Out-of-state commercial seed testing laboratories charge four to six times more for their services.

**STRATEGY 4.1      Reduce selling of low quality agricultural seeds, vegetable seeds and lawn/turf seeds to farmers and consumers.**

- Prevent Louisiana from becoming a dumping ground for poor quality seeds by randomly sampling agricultural seeds to ensure “truth-in-labeling”.
- Regulatory testing ensures varietal purity, freedom of noxious weeds and information valuable to farmers to determine planting rates.
- Maintain cooperative agreement with USDA Seed Branch in assisting in enforcement of the Federal Seed Act.

**STRATEGY 4.2      Provide quality control service for businesses selling seeds.**

- Serve as a quality control laboratory for seedsmen to check and monitor the condition of their seeds in stock and as a means to obtain germination percentages to update the “test date” on lots of seed offered for sale (all agricultural and most vegetable seeds have a date of test on the label and the seed can legally be sold for only 9 months, inclusive of the month of “*test date*” on tag).

**STRATEGY 4.3      Provide non-biased investigations and documentation of seed quality, labeling and field stand complaints.**

- Maintain inspector staff thoroughly trained in the most current techniques and to apply those investigative techniques to seed complaints that could lead to civil litigation.

**STRATEGY 4.4      Provide seed testing services for those companies or individuals wanting standard or special seed tests on agricultural, vegetable, lawn or forest seeds.**

- Perform standard purity and germination tests so that seedsmen can label seed lots.
- Perform special vigor tests to aid farmers to more accurately project actual field emergence of seeds planted.

**STRATEGY 4.5      Educate seedsmen, farmers and consumers of the requirements of the Louisiana Seed Law and its pursuant rules and regulations.**

- Educating and offering compliance assistance to seed dealers, farmers and consumers is a prerequisite to enforcement and is a continuous process as new people enter the businesses.

**STRATEGY 4.6      Provide accurate analyses of seed lots used in state highway contracts and in Soil Conservation Service (SCS)/Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) Programs.**



- Provide analysis reports on seed lots used in highway construction projects. Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) law requires that a contractor must produce analysis reports from the Louisiana State Seed Testing Laboratory in order to be reimbursed for seed lots used in a public job.
- Provide analysis reports to farmers on seed lots they have planted in order for them to receive program payments for SCS or ASCS.

**STRATEGY 4.7      Maintain genetic purity and physical quality of superior crop varieties.**

- Inspect seed fields to determine if requirements are met as set forth in the Louisiana Seed Certification Standards.
- Make provisions for roguing out undesirable plant types and noxious weeds.
- Collect samples and perform laboratory analysis to determine eligibility for certification.

**STRATEGY 4.8      Provide a mechanism whereby Louisiana seed companies may export seed to European countries who are members of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).**

- Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with USDA to carry out OECD seed schemes.
- Inspect seed fields to determine OECD eligibility.

**STRATEGY 4.9      Perform Phytosanitary inspections of seed fields to facilitate seed exports.**

- Inspect fields to determine the presence or absence of organisms of concern to importing countries.
- Issue reports to accompany seeds in transit to other countries verifying presence or absence of specific organisms.

**STRATEGY 4.10    Maintain records to ensure the identity of all certified seed is preserved.**

- Require that grower names, field numbers and proof relating to source of seed be submitted with application for certification.
- Require seed companies and producers to use bulk-shipping reports when moving bulk seed that is eligible for certification across state lines.
- Require certified seed processors to maintain strict records to ensure the integrity of certified seed lots is not jeopardized in processing.

**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Seed Regulatory and Testing Program
  - Percent of seed samples tested within tolerance
    - Number of seed samples tested
    - Number of seed samples tested within tolerance
  - Percent of acres planted with tested seed
    - Number of plantable acres

- Number of acres planted with tested seed
- Number of licensed seed dealers
- Seed Certification Program
  - Percent of acres petitioned for certification that meet the requirements of Standards
    - Number of participating farmers
    - Number of acres potentially planted from the production of Louisiana certified seed
    - Number of acres petitioned for certification
    - Number of acres petitioned for certification that meet the requirements of Standards

\*\*Louisiana is one of only five states that produce certified rice seed.

\*\*\*Louisiana is the only state that produces certified sugarcane seed.

Customers: farmers, growers, retail seed dealers, seed distributors, certified seed growers, cattlemen and citizens of Louisiana.

Limiting factors: funding, shortage of field inspectors and seed testing laboratory analysts.



## **OFFICE OF AGRO CONSUMER SERVICES**

**BENJY RAYBURN, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER**  
(225) 922-1341

Ashley Dupree, Director - Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission  
Division

Bob Simon, Director - Dairy Division

Todd Thompson, Director - Weights and Measures Division

Michelle Estay, Director - Commodities Promotion and Research Division

## **OFFICE OF AGRO CONSUMER SERVICES**

The Office of Agro-Consumer Services is comprised of the Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission, the Weights and Measures Division, the Dairy Division, and the Commodities Promotion and Research Division.

The mission of the Office of Agro-Consumer Services is to ensure that equity prevails in the marketplace by regulating various aspects of commerce and trade and by promoting and heightening consumer awareness of Louisiana's agricultural commodities to increase sales, thereby enhancing the economic well being of Louisiana farmers and the State as a whole. The Office ensures that Louisiana consumers get what they pay for, that producers have markets available and receive fair compensation for their commodities, and that businesses have a favorable environment in which to operate. To carry out this mission, the Office of Agro-Consumer Services Program: (1) regulates the measuring, transportation, and sale of dairy products; (2) licenses, inspects, and audits all grain dealers, warehouses, and cotton merchants in the state; (3) inspects and certifies all commercially used weights, measures, and weighing and measuring devices including motor fuel dispensers, taxi meters, and point of sale price scanners; (4) licenses scale companies and technicians; (5) provides price stability in the marketplace and assures an environment conducive to fair and equal competition as provided under Dairy Stabilization Board rules and regulations; (6) maintains the official state standards of mass, length and volume, which are traceable to the National Institute of Standards & Technology; and (7) promotes the development, production, and sale of Louisiana commodities through research and marketing activities.

The goal of the Office of Agro-Consumer Services is to provide services that ensure consumer protection for all Louisiana citizens, to promote economic growth in the state by maintaining a fair and competitive business environment, to improve the ability of Louisiana producers to capitalize upon promotion and research opportunities, to strengthen Louisiana's farmers markets and roadside vegetable stands, and to educate potential consumers of the positive benefits of buying fresh local agricultural products.

### **LOUISIANA AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES COMMISSION**

The Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission (Commission) was created by the Louisiana Legislature in 1982 by combining the Grain Division and the Warehouse Commission. The Agricultural Commodities Commission was created due to losses suffered by Louisiana producers and landowners. These losses were the results of nine grain dealers involved in Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings. These bankruptcies resulted in losses to producers and landowners of approximately \$6,000,000. In 1997 the Louisiana Legislature passed the law requiring cotton merchants be regulated by the Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission due to the losses suffered by cotton producers in the state similar to the situations of the grain dealers.

The Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission is responsible for the licensing of all agricultural warehouses, grain dealers and cotton merchants doing business in Louisiana. There are 69 warehouses, 82 grain dealers, and 15 cotton merchants licensed in 2009-10. The Commission requires a financial statement, proof of provisional stock insurance, a bond and other supporting documents be presented to the Commission before being approved for a license. All financial statements are carefully reviewed to make sure every applicant is financially stable so the Louisiana producer will be guaranteed payment.

## **WAREHOUSE PROGRAM**

The Commission employees perform physical inventories (approximately 315 examinations annually) of all licensed warehouses in this state. The examiners measured each grain bin and take an inventory to make ensure that the amount of stored grain is equal to the amount the producers have in storage.

In addition, the Agricultural Commodities Commission is responsible for verifying warehouse receipts that are used by producers and lending institutions. Producers and processing plants use the state warehouse receipts as a means of financing their operations. The examiners issue and check these receipts to ensure the warehouse receipts reflect the grain that is actually stored in the warehouse. The total value of warehouse receipted grain in the fiscal year 2008-09 exceeded \$393,000,000.

## **GRAIN INSPECTION PROGRAM – OFFICIAL GRAIN INSPECTION SERVICES**

The Grain Inspection Program involves performing federally mandated grain inspection procedures on grain samples when requests are made. These requests are made on a variety of grain carriers (i.e. barges, rail cars, trucks) and producer submitted samples.

## **GRAIN SAMPLER/GRADER CERTIFICATION**

Grain graders are certified each year by a series of written examinations and samples that are reviewed by department graders. There is a testing and certification fee assessed on each applicant.

In 2009, the Agricultural Commodities Commission certified 59 grain graders and samplers. The certification process resulted in \$1,535.00 generated.

## **MOISTURE METER CERTIFICATION**

The Agricultural Commodities Commission certifies all moisture meters utilized in assessing discounts to producers each year. This is accomplished by cross checking grain dealer moisture meters with department owned moisture meters. There is a fee charged for each inspection. In 2009 – 2010, 157 moisture meters were certified resulting in \$9,600.00 generated.

## **COTTON MERCHANT PROGRAM**

The Cotton Merchant Program was revised and commingled with the Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission on August 15, 1997. This program was initiated because of numerous losses to cotton producers who sold cotton to the merchants that were not financially sound. The law now requires a financial statement containing a Balance Sheet, Statement of Retained Earnings, Statement of Income and Statement of Cash Flow be submitted so that each merchant's financial position can be assessed accurately in order to achieve minimal losses to producers. This program provides the Louisiana cotton producers the security of selling their commodity with the assurance of receiving payment.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Agricultural Commodities Commission currently operates with a total of 12 positions. These positions were previously divided between the two separate divisions. The current format of the Agricultural Commodities Commission allows better utilization of manpower by the Warehouse Program and the Grain Inspection Program.

The budget of the Agricultural Commodities Commission is totally self-generated. The budget is maintained by a series of fees assessed to users of the various services offered by the Agricultural Commodities Commission. Examples of the fees are:

- Check-off on each bushel of grain sold.
- Inspection fee on each request for official grain inspection service.
- Fee for moisture meter inspection.
- Fee for certifying each grain grader/sampler.

As a result of the services that the Agricultural Commodities Commission has provided in past years, there has been minimal loss to Louisiana producers as a result of grain dealer bankruptcy. Producers are now assured of receiving fair and accurate grades on commodities sold to grain dealer in this state.

## **OBJECTIVE 1 – AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES COMMISSION**

To provide an effective program of regulation of the Louisiana grain and cotton industry in order for the producers to sell and/or store their agricultural products to financially secure warehouses and grain dealers. The commission also maintains an official grain inspection program and a moisture meter program to provide cost effective services to producers and grain companies. The commission also has a cotton merchant program to assure producers that companies buying cotton are financially able to pay producers.

### **STRATEGY 1.1      Maintain federal designation as an official grain inspection agency.**

- Successfully complete tri-annual USDA re-designation as an official agency.

### **STRATEGY 1.2      Continue to provide cost-effective services to producers and grain companies.**

- Save grain producers and grain company's unnecessary fees.

### **STRATEGY 1.3      Provide training seminars for grain graders and department inspectors.**

- Ensure that inspectors have the necessary skills and equipment.

### **STRATEGY 1.4      Computerize all grain inspection labs.**

- Reduce cost of issuing certificates to industry by having the capability to issue on-line.

## **STRATEGY 1.5**

### **Upgrade the warehouse inspection program.**

- Work with USDA to reinstate Cooperative Agreement in the Warehouse Division.

## **DAIRY DIVISION**

The Dairy Stabilization Board, Milk Testing Program and Milk Buyers Bonding Program operate within the framework of the Dairy division. The duties and responsibilities of each program support and compliment each other to the extent that they regulate and/or promote stability and orderly marketing of fluid milk within the state of Louisiana

Given the importance of the dairy industry in Louisiana and the relative short shelf life of fluid dairy products, orderly marketing is imperative to both the consuming public and the milk producers. The Dairy Stabilization Board addresses problems created in the marketplace, the milk testing program addresses the raw production and handling of milk from the farm to the processing plant. The milk buyer bonding program is designed to guarantee the payment for milk the farmer sells to the processing plant or cooperative.

### **DAIRY STABILIZATION BOARD**

The purpose of the Dairy Stabilization Board is to provide a regulatory program that is designed to stabilize the Louisiana dairy industry in order to assure an adequate supply of healthful and wholesome dairy products to Louisiana consumers at fair and reasonable prices.

The Dairy Stabilization Board is composed of eight members appointed by the governor: two milk producers, one wholesale grocer, one processor, one retailer, and three consumers. No consumer member shall be engaged in producing, processing or selling dairy products nor have a personal economic interest in any person who is so engaged.

The dairy industry is peculiarly susceptible to injury resulting from price wars and a variety of disruptive trade practices that flourish in the absence of effective regulation. Price wars and disruptive trade practices tend to cause financial ruin for Louisiana's dairy farmers and for locally owned processors and distributors regardless of how efficient and well managed they might be.

The Dairy Stabilization Board has established regulations to prevent unfair methods of competition, unfair or deceptive acts or practices and disruptive trade practices in the sale of milk and dairy products.

To enforce these regulations, the Dairy Stabilization Board licenses all processors, distributors, and retailers of dairy products. There are approximately 16,000 licenses.

The Dairy Stabilization Board also investigates complaints regarding violations of its regulations and audits the financial records of processors, distributors and retailers to determine the costs of manufacturing, selling, and delivering of dairy products.

Funds for the administration and enforcement of this program are entirely from self-generated funds acquired by an assessment on all dairy products sold in Louisiana.

## **MILK TESTING**

The current law governing volume measurement and butterfat testing of milk and cream is authorized by Act 306 of the 1974 session of the Louisiana Legislature.

The purpose of the law is to regulate the Louisiana dairy industry as related to:

- Measuring, sampling and testing of producer milk
- Licensing of technical personnel
- Issuance of statistical reports
- Establishment of uniform technical procedures throughout the state.

The responsibility of enforcement of the law is assigned to the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Milk Testing Program. The Program issues 162 technical licenses; also supervises the collection of and fat determination of 76,800 fresh samples of milk from approximately 153 dairy farmers. The annual milk production in Louisiana is approximately 400 million pounds of fluid milk, having an economic impact of \$57.4 million at the farm level. Processing and retain add another \$111 million. Total economic contribution from dairying including sales from animals is \$150.6 million.

The Milk Testing Program has developed and maintains a very close working relationship with other dairy groups such as the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Louisiana State University Dairy Science Department, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, Louisiana Dairy Products Association and others.

The Milk Testing Program operates on an annual budget of \$93,507. The program is staffed by one part time inspector and additional office staff personnel cross utilized with other divisions within the department.

## **MILK BUYERS BONDING PROGRAM**

The Milk Buyers Bonding Program is a part of the Dairy Division and is mandated under Title 7, Chapter 53, Section 5303.

The State of Louisiana has approximately 153 dairy farms producing 400,000,000 pounds of milk per year which has a farm value of \$57.4 million. The estimated retail value of this milk is \$150.6 million.

Milk is a perishable product; therefore, the Milk Buyers Bonding Program is a necessary program of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry to guarantee that the 153 dairy farms will receive payment for milk purchased by all Louisiana milk plants and cooperatives.

Dairy farmers are the only farmers whose product is sold and consumed before they are paid for the milk. In the previous 40 years, it has been necessary to invoke the bond on several processors who went out of business.



## **OBJECTIVE II. DAIRY DIVISION:**

To provide an effective program of regulation for the Louisiana dairy industry in order to eliminate speculation and waste; to assure a continued supply of high quality dairy products at fair and reasonable prices; to assure dairy farmers, processors and distributors a fair and stable market for their products; and to enable the Dairy Stabilization Board and the milk testing division to operate within the framework of the Dairy Division to support and compliment each other to the extent that they regulate and/or promote stability and orderly marketing of dairy products in Louisiana.

### **STRATEGY 2.1**

Maintain a licensing program.

*Ensure that all haulers, technicians, processors, distributors and retailers are properly licensed and that processors are paying proper assessments.*

### **STRATEGY 2.2**

Provide a training program for industry personnel.

*Ensure all milk haulers and personnel handling milk samples are properly trained. Work closely with milk plants and handlers in regulating and enforcing milk testing laws and rules and regulation.*

### **STRATEGY 2.3**

Maintain a butterfat testing program.

*Monitor butterfat sampling, testing, and weighing, and perform periodic tests for comparison.*

### **STRATEGY 2.4**

Assure a stable market environment for dairy products.

*Provide a regulatory program to prevent unfair methods of competition and deceptive and/or disruptive trade practices in the marketing of milk and dairy products.*

*Monitor prices of milk and dairy products. Provide a program to investigate potential violation of dairy law and rules and regulations.*

### **STRATEGY 2.5**

Cross utilization with Agriculture Commodities Commission and Weights and Measures Division employees.

### **STRATEGY 2.6**

Maintain a bonding program.

*Assure that processors provide a bond or other surety to ensure payment to dairy farmers.*

<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Actual 2008-90</b>	<b>Existing 2009-10</b>	<b>Continuation 2010-11</b>	<b>Recommended 2011-2014</b>
Milk Testing and Bonding:				
No. Processors Supervised	9	9	9	8
No. Plant Visits	650	650	650	350
No. Fresh Samples Taken	80,000	76,800	75,500	55,845
No. Complaints Investigated	50	50	50	26
No. Technical Licenses Issued/Renewed	240	235	230	162

Dairy Stabilization Board:				
No. Yearly Service Hours	3569	3600	3600	3300
No. Complaints Received/ Investigated	287	287	287	230

### **CUSTOMERS**

- Dairy farmers
- Processors, distributors, retailers
- Haulers
- Labs, testing facilities
- Technical personnel
- Marketing groups
- Legislature

### **LIMITING FACTORS**

- Funding
- Licensee participation
- Licensee cooperation
- Compliance

### **WEIGHTS AND MEASURES**

The Weights and Measures Law has been in effect since 1948; however, in May, 1992, the Weights and Measures Commission was established by the Louisiana Legislature (Act of 1992). The purpose of this Commission is to ensure equity in the marketplace. The Weights and Measures Commission exercises unbiased judgment to ensure consumer protection for the buyer as well as the seller. The Division keeps a general supervision over the weights and measures as well as weight and measuring devices offered for sale, sold and in use in the state. At least once a year, and more often if necessary, the division inspects, tests, and tries all weights, measures and devices that weigh and measure commercial products.

From time to time, the division weighs or measures and inspects packages or amounts of commodities of whatever kind kept for the purpose of sale, offered or exposed for sale, or sold in the process of delivery, in order to determine whether they contain the amounts represented and whether they are offered for sale in accordance with law enforced by the division.

Federal programs affiliated with the Weights and Measures Commission include the testing of scales at Veterans Administration Hospitals, and Military Bases in the state. The division works in conjunction with the Federal Packers and Stockyards ensuring accuracy of the scales to meet their requirements.

## **TYPES OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY WEIGHTS AND MEASURES DIVISION**

1. Scale Inspections
2. Package Inspections
3. Scanner Inspections
4. Taxi Inspections
5. Milk Inspections
6. Calibration of Farm milk tanks
7. Licensing of Weighmasters
8. Metrology testing calibrations
9. Retail Motor Fuel Dispensers

## **METROLOGY LABORATORY**

The Metrology Laboratory serves as the State's primary standards laboratory and as a scientific authority for measurement certification. Specifically, the Metrology Laboratory maintains the official state standards of mass, length and volume, calibrates and certifies those standards and instruments which are used by state government, commerce, industry, education and research institutions. In addition, it provides technical assistance in the measurement field. Most contracts awarded to industries, especially Federal contracts, stipulate that the standards used in testing and quality control must be certified by an institution that maintains trace ability to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). All industries and institutions in the state have to rely on our Weights and Measures Laboratory for standard certification. The Weights and Measures Program is currently operating on a budget of \$3,400,000. The program is staffed with 34 Field Inspectors statewide at this time. This division is the official State agency regulating weights, measures and count.

## **WEIGHTS AND MEASURES FEE SCHEDULE**

1. Scale Registration:
  - A. Category 1 ( 0 to 1000 lbs.).....\$35.00
  - B. Category 2 ( 1001 to 10,000 lbs.) .....\$ 80.00
  - C. Category 3 (over 10,000 lbs.).....\$ 185.00
2. Package Inspections .....No charge
3. Scanner Registrations - per location
  - A. Category A ( 1 to 10 devices).....\$ 50.00
  - B. Category B ( 11 to 25 devices) .....\$ 100.00
  - C. Category C ( Over 25 devices) .....\$ 150.00
4. Taxicab Registration, per Cab
  - A. Category 1, per meter.....\$ 50.00

Service Agency Registration

A. Category 1, per location .....\$ 100.00

Service Person Registration

A. Category 1, per technician.....\$ 50.00

5. Milk Inspections.....No Charge

6. Milk Tank Calibrations.....No Charge

7. Weighmaster license

A. Category 1, per weighmaster.....\$ 75.00

8. Metrology Tolerance Testing

A. Category 1 (up to and including 10 lbs or  
5 kilograms) .....\$ 2.00

B. Category 2 (10 lbs or 5 kilograms up to and including 100 lbs or 60  
kilograms) .....\$ 5.00

C. Category 3 (100 lbs or 60 kilograms up to and including 1000 lbs or 500 kilograms).....\$ 25.00

D. Category 4 (over 1000 lbs or 500 kilograms)  
.....\$ 50.00

9. Mass Calibration with Report of Corrections and Uncertainties

A. Category 1 (up to and including 5 lbs or  
3 kilograms) .....\$ 25.00

B. Category 2 (over 5 lbs or 3 kilograms and including 50 lbs or 30  
kilograms) .....\$ 50.00

NOTE: All tape certification, volumetric testing and calibration or special test not  
listed shall be performed at a rate of \$30.00 per hour.

**OBJECTIVE III - WEIGHTS AND MEASURES DIVISION:**

To ensure that equity prevails in the marketplace for both buyers and sellers by inspecting all weighing, measuring, metering, and scanning devices used commercially in the state. In addition, commodities sold by weight, measure, or count are inspected to ensure consumers are getting what they pay for.

**STRATEGY 3.1**

Continue current programs relating to all areas regulated.

*Strive to improve efficiency and effectiveness of various programs to maximize benefits to both consumers and industry.*

**STRATEGY 3.2**

Provide training for personnel

*Maintain a properly trained and professional staff to help ensure objective is met.*

**STRATEGY 3.3**

Integrate computer technology into inspections.

*Update equipment and aid in the development of computer software to more*

*efficiently transfer of inspection data from the field to the home office.*

#### STRATEGY 3.4

Maintain a licensing and registration program.

*Ensure service personnel are qualified and that devices used commercially meet Louisiana and NTEP requirements.*

#### STRATEGY 3.5

Maintain certification of Metrology Lab

*Ensure that NIST lab requirements are met and that metrologist (s) maintain proper certifications.*

Performance Indicator	Actual 2008-09	Existing 2009-10	Continuation 2011-12	Recommended 2012-2014
WEIGHTS AND MEASURES:				
No. Commercial Weighing- Measuring Devices Inspected, including Motor Fuel Dispensers	74,008	75,000	76,000	76,000
No. Prepackaged Commodities Tested	350,000	375,000	375,000	375,000
No. Weighmasters Licenses Issued	2,919	3,000	3,000	3,000
No. Metrology Calibration /Tolerance Tests Performed	3,824	4,000	4,000	4,000
No. Taxi Meter Registrations	2,320	2,350	2,350	2,350
No. Scanners Inspected	25,503	26,000	26,000	26,000
No. Complaints Regarding Weighing Investigated	487	500	500	500

#### CUSTOMERS

-All commercial businesses  
using scanning, metering, weighing  
or measuring devices

#### LIMITING FACTORS

-Funding  
-Compliance

### **COMMODITIES PROMOTION AND RESEARCH**

#### **SENIOR FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM**

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) is a program established by Congress and administered by the USDA's Food & Nutrition Service. Under the program, FNS makes grants to States, US Territories, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments. The grants must be used to provide low-income seniors with coupons or equivalent benefits they may exchange for eligible foods at farmers' markets, roadside stands and Community Supported Agriculture programs. Eligible foods are fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables, herbs and honey.

The SFMNP was announced in 2001 as a pilot program and it became a permanent program in 2003. In 2001, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry received a grant of \$500,000 of which \$344,208 was used. In 2004, due to program cuts, the department received \$279,584 and \$281,824 was used. In 2004, there were 23 farmers' markets, 61 roadside stands and 205 farmers participating in the program.

The program has continued to be funded annually and in 2008, the department received a grant of \$418,973 and \$248,758 was used. Due to hurricanes Gustav and Ike, crop availability and farmers' market access was limited resulting in reduced coupon redemption. In 2008, there were 31 farmers' markets, 75 roadside stands, 302 farmers and 13,087 low income seniors participating in the program. This program helps seniors have access to fresh locally grown vegetables and as a result of the program Louisiana farmers benefit from the increased sales. The

Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs, parish Councils on Aging, the Food for Seniors Program, parish Community Action Agencies, the LSU AgCenter and Southern University, supports this program.

### **WIC FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM**

In 2005 the Department began a WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program in East Baton Rouge Parish on a pilot basis. The WIC FMNP is similar to the Senior FMNP, except that the client base is for those who qualify for WIC benefits. The program will be jointly administered by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health, WIC Program. The Funds available for the pilot program totaled \$6,667. With low redemption rates in this parish the pilot program was moved to Orleans Parish in 2008 in hopes of a better redemption rate.

In 2009, the WIC program was again made available to Orleans Parish. Funds available for the WIC program total \$6,667. Redemption rate is anticipated to increase by 20%.

### **LOUISIANA DAIRY INDUSTRY PROMOTION BOARD**

Established by R.S. 3:557.4, the Board is responsible for the development and implementation of advertising, promotional and education programs designed to increase the consumption of milk and other dairy products. A department employee staffs the board serving as director of the Dairy Industry Promotion Board. The dairy board sponsors numerous special events and promotions throughout the state each year to enhance consumer demand and consumption of more milk and dairy products. In addition to the director conducting administrative duties, program responsibilities are also conducted by the director such as; promotes the nutritional value of dairy products; schedules the Mobile Dairy Truck appearances at Louisiana schools, festivals and the State Fair; presents nutrition education to kids; coordinates the Dairy Farmers of Louisiana booth at the annual Ag Expo (Monroe) and is responsible for numerous other special events, advertising projects and exhibits promoting milk.

Louisiana dairy farmers provide funding to carry out the responsibilities of the board. Ten (10.0) cents per hundredweight is levied against all milk produced in Louisiana and is collected at the first point of sale from the producer's milk marketing cooperative or from processors who buy directly from producers who are not members of a milk marketing cooperative. The Office of Management and Finance performs all accounting functions related to income and disbursements. The department retains three (3) percent of collections for administration of this program and forwards the balance to the board to carry out its responsibilities as defined by statute.

The Louisiana Dairy Industry Promotion Board is one of sixty-two (62) state or regional dairy product promotion, research or nutrition education programs qualified by USDA to receive funds from a fifteen (15) cent per hundredweight assessment on milk sales, pursuant to Section 1150.153 of the Federal Dairy Promotion and Research Order. The National Dairy Promotion and Research Program is funded by a mandatory assessment of fifteen (15) cents per hundredweight on all milk marketed commercially in the 48 contiguous states; however, if a state or regional program becomes qualified by USDA, the program can retain ten (10) cents of the fifteen (15) cent assessment. The Louisiana Dairy Industry Promotion Board is a qualified program and must receive annual certification as a qualified program to receive the ten (10) cents. To qualify each year, the board must demonstrate that it has not engaged in any activity other than promotion, research, and nutrition education designed to increase consumption of milk and other dairy products.

## **LOUISIANA RICE PROMOTION BOARD**

Established in R.S. 3:551.61-551.67, the mission of the board is to promote the growth and development of the rice industry in Louisiana by the promotion of rice. The department collects assessments on all rice produced in Louisiana at the rate of 3.0 cents per hundredweight of dry rough rice. The assessment is deducted by each rice miller or handler from the amount paid the producer at the first point of sale, whether within or without the state. The assessments are remitted to the department on a monthly basis by the miller or handler. The department retains 2% of the assessment collected for administrative costs and transfers the balance to the board.

Division staff provides financial reports to the board detailing all assessments collected and funds transferred to the board to cover their administrative costs and to fund promotion projects and activities. Division staff attends all board meetings and serves as liaison between the board and the department.

## **LOUISIANA RICE RESEARCH BOARD**

Established in R.S. 3:551.71-551.77, the mission of the board is to promote the growth and development of the rice industry in Louisiana by expanded research of rice. The department collects assessments on all rice produced in Louisiana at the rate of 5.0 cents per hundredweight of dry rough rice. The assessment is deducted by each rice miller or handler from the amount paid the producer at the first point of sale, whether within or without the state. The assessments are remitted to the department on a monthly basis by the miller or handler. The department retains 2% of the assessment collected for administrative costs and transfers the balance to the board.

Division staff provides financial reports to the board detailing all assessments collected and funds transferred to the board to cover their administrative costs and to fund research projects. Division staff attends all board meetings and serves as liaison between the board and the department.

## **LOUISIANA SOYBEAN AND GRAIN RESEARCH AND PROMOTION BOARD**

Established in R.S. 3:551.11-551.36, the mission of the board is to promote the growth and development of the soybean, wheat, corn and grain sorghum industries in Louisiana through research and advertisement. The department collects assessments on all soybeans produced in Louisiana at the rate of 1/2% of the net value of sales and on all wheat, corn and grain sorghum produced in Louisiana at the rate of 2 cent per bushel. The assessment is deducted by the buyer at the first point of sale and is deducted from the amount paid the producer, whether within or without the state. The assessments are remitted to the department on a monthly basis by the buyer. Farmers are not entitled to receive soybean assessment refunds, however, grain farmers may obtain a refund of the assessments by submitting a written request within 30 days from the date of sale. Copies of sales slips signed by the buyer must accompany the request. The department retains 3% of the assessments collected for administrative costs and transfers the balance to the board.

Division staff provides financial reports to the board detailing all assessments collected and funds transferred to the board to cover their administrative costs and to fund research and promotion projects as approved by the board. Division staff attends all board meetings and serves as liaison between the board and the department.



## **OFFICE OF ANIMAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY**

**BRENT ROBBINS, DVM, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER  
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER AND  
ACTING STATE VETERINARIAN  
(225) 925-3962**

**Michelle W. Ribera, Deputy Assistant Commissioner and  
Director of Livestock Brand Commission**

**Bobby Babin, Director of Egg Commission and  
Director of the Meat Inspection, Poultry, Egg and  
Food Quality Service Divisions**

**Paul A. Blair, Director of Strawberry Marketing Board**

**Martha A. Littlefield, DVM, MS, Assistant State Veterinarian and  
Assistant Director of the Board of Animal Health**

**Rebecca Riecke, Director of Catfish Promotion and Research Board**

**Mike St. Romain, Director of Food Distribution Division**

**John Walther – ESF-11 Coordinator  
Emergency Management**



# **OFFICE OF ANIMAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY**

## **MISSION**

The mission of the Office of Animal Health & Food Safety, through state and federal mandates, is to guard and protect the integrity of the livestock industry against animal diseases through diagnostic, preventative, eradication and other deterrent measures. Additionally the office is responsible for protecting the food chain, public health and general welfare of the Louisiana citizenry by assuring that meat, seafood, poultry, eggs, fruits and vegetables and their products are properly identified, labeled, inspected and accurately graded. The Office of Animal Health & Food Safety shall also be responsible for the control of livestock theft and denying a market for stolen cattle and horses in Louisiana, all in accordance with applicable law. The Food Distribution Program administers the USDA Commodity Program (Sections 2 and 6 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, The Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983, and 7CFR 250, 251). The Office of Animal Health & Food Safety is presently responsible for coordinating the department's Emergency Management and Response before, during and after a disaster. LDAF administers ESF-4, Firefighting and ESF-11, Agriculture. LDAF Emergency Management Division manages the business of these vital functions; a complex endeavor that requires planning, preparation and practice to fulfill the mission when the need arrives.

## **GOALS**

The goal of this program is to maintain a safe and healthful food supply for the people of Louisiana, while simultaneously protecting and safeguarding the producers of these products. The program inspects and grades food products, controls livestock diseases and tracks ownership of livestock through a branding activity. The activities of this program are: Administrative, Federal/State Meat Program, Poultry and Egg Inspection, Food Quality Services, Livestock Disease Prevention, Livestock Theft Prevention, Emergency Management and Food Distribution Program.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT** - LDAF has the responsibility as authorized by the Louisiana Emergency Operation Plan to administer two of the fifteen Emergency Support Functions. These functions are ESF-4, Firefighting and ESF-11, Agriculture. LDAF Emergency Management Division manages the business of these vital functions. Emergency management is a complex endeavor that requires year round planning, preparation and practice to fulfill the mission when the need arrives. Full time year round staffing is utilized by LDAF to meet the needs of its emergency response responsibilities.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: FOOD DISTRIBUTION** – The Food Distribution Program ensures the USDA commodities are distributed to eligible recipient agencies and that those agencies are reviewed as required. Further, the office ensures the safe storage and handling of the commodities until consumed. The Food Distribution Program is responsible for the ordering, warehousing, and distribution of foods purchased by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for use in federally approved child nutrition programs and for food purchased for distribution to low income citizens and families. It also is responsible for ensuring that recipient agencies are operated in compliance with federal requirements (agreement, regulation and law) by monitoring receiving agencies (schools, summer feeding sponsors, food banks and their member agencies), resolving findings and reporting activities to the USDA which ensure that these foods are protected and are distributed only to those who are eligible to receive these benefits.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: FOOD QUALITY SERVICES (FRUITS AND VEGETABLES) - (R.S. 3:405) (Title 3, Chapter 5)** The Food Quality Services (FQS) program provides unbiased third party (collaborator) inspections, state inspections, and shipping point inspections for fresh fruits and vegetables grown in Louisiana. This program inspects and certifies grade, quality and condition of fresh fruits, vegetables, peanuts and pecans at shipping ports and receiving markets in the state; and inspects and certifies fresh produce purchased by federal and state institutions. The FQS program has a cooperative agreement with the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Branch to provide Federal/State inspection services.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: LIVESTOCK BRAND COMMISSION - (R.S. 3:732)** The Livestock Brand Commission is responsible for the protection of property through the investigation of farm related crimes with the main focus on the identification of livestock through registered brands and markings. Twelve employees across the state are commissioned law enforcement officers who protect lives and property, deter and investigate agricultural related crimes, bring perpetrators to justice and perform other related duties. They are responsible for performing the following tasks: monitoring and inspecting all livestock at video or public sales as well as any livestock either in shipping or to be shipped; identifying criminal activity involving farm related crimes and apprehending criminals; providing specialized assistance when a massive application of manpower is required during disaster, civil disturbance or terrorist situation; providing assistance to law enforcement agencies in investigating farm related crime; providing assistance to persons unable to help themselves, or are in danger or in need of other emergency services; and conducting various informational programs for the public in regards to livestock identification and farm related crimes.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: MEAT INSPECTION - (R.S. 3:4201)** Louisiana's Meat and Poultry Inspection Program is a cooperative state-federal program. Its mission is to provide consumers with safe, wholesome, properly labeled meat and poultry products. The Program is responsible for inspecting all meats of animals slaughtered and processed in Louisiana facilities; inspecting meat processing facilities for compliance with federal and state requirements; operating an accredited laboratory that analyzes meat and poultry products for economic and microbiological adulteration; reviewing and approving the labels of meat and meat products to assure that accurate product information is supplied to the consumer. This Program provides continuous inspection to 62 commercial slaughter and processing facilities, as well as periodic inspection of 24 custom slaughter and processing plants. Inspected slaughter establishments, inspected processors, custom slaughterers, custom processors and warehouses distributing meat and poultry products must be licensed by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. The Program is also made up of a compliance segment responsible for investigating violations of meat and poultry regulations such as the illegal slaughter, processing, and sale of uninspected meat products. State compliance officers conduct food safety surveillance reviews at stores, restaurants, and distribution warehouses to ensure meat products sold have been inspected, are being stored properly and have not been adulterated or contaminated after leaving the processing facility. These officers also investigate consumer complaints. Under the state-federal cooperative agreement, the Program must enforce requirements "at least equal to" those imposed under the Federal Meat Inspection Act and Poultry Products Inspection Act. FSIS provides up to 50% of the State's operating funds, as well as training and other assistance.

**Grading & Certification:** The Meat Inspection Division conducts a voluntary Grading and Certification Program for meat and meat products and fish and fishery products. This program assures that products purchased by institutions and schools meet the Institutional Meat Purchasing Specifications and general requirements for Fish and Fishery Products. The Grading & Certification Program prevents a vendor from shipping a lower valued product than what the

purchase order calls for, resulting in substantial savings for both state institutions and participating school systems. This Program is funded through a \$0.04/pound fee paid by participating vendors for the certification of their product.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: POULTRY AND EGGS - (R.S. 3:405; 3:410) (Title 3, Chapter 5)**  
The Poultry & Egg Division is responsible for establishing grades for poultry and eggs sold in Louisiana. The Division is authorized through cooperative agreements with the USDA to establish and maintain grading services at authorized USDA poultry and egg plants; provide fee grading services at off-plant locations; and perform shell egg surveillance at all shell egg plants and hatcheries. The Poultry and Eggs Division is responsible for enforcing State laws, rules and regulations for egg and poultry production, packing and sales. The Louisiana Egg Commission is charged by the State Legislature with the duty of promoting eggs and egg products in Louisiana, issuing licenses to all producers, packers, processors, wholesalers, brokers, or any other entity except retailers. In addition the Commission has the authority to hold hearings on any violation of the State Egg Marketing laws and revoke or suspend licenses if necessary. The LDAF Poultry and Egg Division is responsible for the regulation and enforcement of all rules and regulations pertaining to the Egg Commission. The Commission is composed of nine members appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry who serves as an ex-officio member. The Commissioner appoints someone from his staff to serve as Director of the Egg Commission and the Department provides staffing for the Commission. In return, the Commission provides \$30,000 per year to the Department to cover the cost of these services. The Egg Commission derives its funding from a \$0.02 per case assessment on all eggs sold in Louisiana, a \$100 per year license fee, and per diem and travel charges for audit work. The Commission generates an average of \$420,000 a year on fee collection from companies doing business in Louisiana.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY: VETERINARY HEALTH DIVISION (formerly known as LIVESTOCK SANITARY BOARD) - (R.S. 3:2091)** The mission of the Office of Animal Health & Food Safety, Veterinary Health Division, is to protect livestock from infectious diseases through diagnostic, preventative, eradication and other measures. The Division is responsible for protecting the public health and general welfare of Louisiana citizens by ensuring the safety of the meat and poultry in the food chain. Furthermore, the Division is responsible for ensuring the safety of all animals during a large scale emergency or disaster, whether accidental or intentional.

Program activities include: 1) providing animal disease diagnostic capabilities using three laboratories; 2) performing regulatory disease surveillance, including monitoring movement of animals into and out of Louisiana; 3) insuring that biologics are correctly approved, monitored and used; 4) monitoring the entrance and husbandry of alternative livestock; 5) providing assistance to the Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness (Acts 2006, No. 615); 6) protecting Louisiana animal agriculture by monitoring for foreign animal diseases; 7) developing a data base of agricultural related business and other animal related items that would aid the National Animal Identification System and its Premises Identification Program; 8) providing a resource to continue USDA cooperative agreements; 9) assist in the National Veterinary Accreditation Program; 10) perform additional work including issuing permits for movement, equine passports, handling orders from veterinarians, 4-H show health certificates and check-ins, approve and inspect any animals purchased by LA Prison Industries, Mycoplasma mastitis program, certify bonds and letters of credit for auction market, collect information on EVA vaccinated horses, inspect litter/poultry incinerators, inspect offal & inedible businesses and monthly inspections of rendering plants; 11) providing outreach to the State, United States and the world; 12) provide regulatory monitoring for the turtle industry; and, 13) provide resources for activities of Boards and Council.

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

LDAF has the responsibility as authorized by the Louisiana Emergency Operation Plan to administer two of the fifteen Emergency Support Functions. These functions are ESF-4, Firefighting and ESF-11, Agriculture. LDAF Emergency Management Division manages the business of these vital functions. Emergency management is a complex endeavor that requires planning, preparation and practice to fulfill the mission when the need arrives. Full time year round staffing is utilized by LDAF to meet the needs of its emergency response responsibilities.

Planning for emergency management is a complex ongoing process that is interrelated at State, regional and local levels. LDAF must coordinate with all layers of government, services provided by the private sector, and aid provided by non- governmental partners. Plans must be written, reviewed and updated to respond to large incidents involving many state agencies. Contracts must be developed and maintained with vendors to provide goods and services needed to carry out our emergency functions. Relationships and agreements have been developed with non- governmental organizations to carry out the roles that can not be accomplished by government. Planning must also account for the continuing function of government in the event of a reduced workforce due to emergency response demands or the effects of an influenza pandemic.

Preparation for emergency response begins with education and training. LDAF currently has more that 450 employees with certified Incident Command System qualifications. Many employees have advanced ICS courses and other training to their credit. We have developed a fully staffed Incident Management Team equipped to manage all hazards with a focus on planning, operations, and documentation. Training of response teams and support branches has been accomplished and more is planned for the future.

Participation in all State planned drills and exercises by LDAF demonstrates our commitment to emergency response. Currently LDAF is preparing for a multi state exercise to test our logistical ability to handle a major Foreign Animal Disease event. Exercises also are planned to test our readiness for response to our missions of pet sheltering, responding to economically damaging plant pest or diseases and providing emergency fuel for lifesaving and life sustaining missions. Monthly meetings of our IMT command and general staff are held to review policies and procedures in our emergency response.

LDAF has a proven record of serving the needs of the citizens of Louisiana in past events including hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, and utility failures. LDAF is prepared to respond to incidents that threaten agriculture, the supply of safe food, natural disasters, and public health emergencies. To maintain our state of readiness, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of disasters LDAF requires full time staffing to carry out our missions. Emergency response to natural or man made disasters is critical to the safety, and economic stability, of Louisiana.

## **FOOD DISTRIBUTION DIVISION**

The Food Distribution division is responsible for administering the USDA donated food commodity program in Louisiana. A staff of 18 employees is utilized to order, warehouse and distribute these donated foods to approximately 700 recipient agencies throughout the state, and to monitor these recipient agencies to ensure compliance with all State and Federal policies and laws. Program categories include:

1. National School Lunch and Breakfast Program
2. State Corrections Facilities
3. Emergency Food Assistance Program
4. Summer Feeding Program
5. Disaster Assistance Program

Commodities are ordered from USDA based upon the needs of recipient agencies and the availability of items. Products are received at contract and state-operated warehouses. Strict inventory and quality control are maintained at these warehouses under the supervision of the Food Distribution Division.

Commodities are distributed to recipient agencies on a regular basis. As an added service, the division provides delivery to all parish and diocese school food authorities who are unable to pick up the commodities.

Monitoring is accomplished through the use of field staff who visit recipient agencies on a regular basis. These field audits ensure that all policies are understood, that commodities are stored and utilized in the most effective manner, that all civil rights requirements are met, and that all recipients of commodity assistance are eligible to receive benefits.

The Food Distribution division also administers the USDA Donated Food Processing Program. The program allows recipient agencies to contract with food processors in order to convert USDA commodities into finished end products at low cost. This is not only advantageous to the recipient agency, but also is a source of revenue for processing firms.

Value of commodities distributed annually ranges from \$18-35 million, depending on USDA purchases.

### **Objective I**

To maintain the administrative cost of the Food Distribution Program at no more than five percent of the value of commodities distributed.

Strategy 1.1 Maintain less than a three month supply of commodities on-hand at any time during the school year.

Strategy 1.2 Upgrade a Food Distribution computer system completed in FY 98.

Strategy 1.3 Continue expansion of diversion of commodities options to approved processors as requested by School Food Authorities.

Strategy 1.4 Process claims for losses of commodities within 30 days of receipt.

Strategy 1.5 Process claims for reimbursement from food banks within 30 days of receipt.

**Performance indicators**

- Cost as a percentage of commodities distributed
- Administrative cost
- Dollar value of commodities
- Number of school children receiving commodities

**Customers**

- School children
- Needy families

**Limiting Factors**

- Funding

## **FOOD QUALITY SERVICES DIVISION**

### **Mission Statement**

The overall mission of the Food Quality Services (formerly Fruits and Vegetables Division) is to provide unbiased third party inspection (collaborator) at terminal markets, to provide shipping point inspections when needed, and to provide inspections for state institutions and other state and parish entities that voluntarily come under the Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program. Our personnel are licensed by the USDA in the following capacities:

- 1 Collaborator
- 2 Collaborators (Limited License continuing to train)
- 5 State licenses for school inspections cross-trained from Poultry and Eggs
- 2 State licenses for citrus testing and sampling cross-trained from Poultry and Eggs

### **Goals and Objectives**

#### **Near Term**

- Maintain cooperative agreements with USDA by way of collaborator and shipping point inspections.
- Continue all State programs that are now in existence through school lunch and state institution inspections of fruits and vegetables.
- Enforcement of all rules and regulations governing marketing of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Implementation of new citrus rules and regulations.

#### **Long Term**

- Better utilization of personnel in the following ways:
  - Continue to use cross-trained inspectors whenever possible.
  - Computer generated printouts of all work performed on a weekly basis.
  - Train quality control personnel for industry; thereby, reducing the number of part-time shipping point inspectors needed.
  - Expand the State Institution/School Lunch Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program.
  - Encourage citrus growers to use better promotion of Louisiana citrus.
  - Enforce "place of origin" for all fruit and vegetable produce.

### **Contributions or New Programs Started Since 1980**

1. Cross utilization of personnel with each division of Animal Health Services and between divisions.
2. Expansion of the collaborator inspection programs. (Currently the division has three (3) collaborators located in the Baton Rouge and Hammond area only of one (1) being fully licensed and two (2) with limited license continuing to train .  
The division does collaborator work in Louisiana and Southwest Mississippi.
3. School Lunch/State Institution Inspection Programs.
4. Enforcement of Maturity Rules for Citrus.
5. Better working relationship with USDA managerial personnel.
6. Updated citrus regulations.
7. Positive lot identification inspections at shipping points.
8. Quality control school for each commodity produced and packed in Louisiana.
9. Enforcement of Proof of Origin on all produce that is labeled as a Louisiana product.

## **THE LIVESTOCK BRAND COMMISSION**

The Livestock Brand Commission is a law enforcement agency with (12) employees:

(1) Director; (1) Assistant Director; (10) Inspectors. The office consists of five (5) major components:

- 1) Theft Prevention
- 2) Investigative
- 3) Identification
- 4) Crimestoppers Program
- 5) Public Relations

The Livestock Brand Commission provides the same level of services today with 50% fewer employees than we had in the 1980's.

### **INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES**

The Livestock Brand Commission provides theft prevention and investigative services to a 2.176 billion dollar agriculture industry which includes the following: cattle, equine, hogs, emu ostrich, turtle, sheep, exotic, chemicals, farm machinery and equipment. The Livestock Brand Commission conducts all investigations, both interdepartmental and otherwise, as directed by the Commissioner.

The Livestock Brand Commission maintains a current record of all brands recorded in the state of Louisiana to provide proof of ownership, identify livestock, and deter cattle theft.

During the preparation, relief and recovery for hurricanes, the LBC officers provide specialized assistance when executing LDAF's ESF 11 responsibilities of the State of Louisiana Emergency Operation Plan. Their duties range from 24-hour security details at fuel sights and animal shelters to monitoring the shipment of cattle out of coastal parishes to avoid theft and confusion of ownership.

During 2009 FY, the Livestock Brand Commission investigated 322 cases of agriculture theft and cleared a total of \$1,997,409 in worth of property subject to investigation.

In the past years, we have progressed from a mediocre law enforcement agency to one of the best and most admired law enforcement agencies in Louisiana agriculture. Our investigators are as capable as any sheriff deputy, police officer, state trooper, or FBI agent in the State of Louisiana.

### **CRIME PREVENTION**

Livestock Brand Commission officers inspect and individually identify each head of livestock sold in public markets in the State of Louisiana including video sales. Descriptions, hot iron, cold brands and electronic identification, along with serial numbers, are all valid identification tools. Officer patrol service is also included in this category during high crime periods. Livestock Brand Commission officers patrol 4H and FFA livestock shows to prevent cheating among contestants. Livestock Brand Commission officers also make public appearances with assorted agricultural groups with tips on how to better protect their livestock and property from theft.



### **SADDLE IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM**

Saddle theft is one of the most popular agriculture items for thieves to prey on. The main reason for thieves to steal saddles is that they do not have identifiable marks or serial numbers. Therefore, it is the intention of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Livestock Brand Commission, to provide all saddle owners in the State of Louisiana the opportunity to have their saddles registered and identified by using a "microchip" implant.

This effort to deter theft will be a joint venture of the Livestock Brand Commission, parish sheriffs, other law enforcement agencies, parish cattlemen associations, riding clubs and the general public of each parish. The procedures required to accomplish this are as follows:

- 1) Contact the sheriff in each parish to determine his wiliness to participate in the project. If the sheriff approves of the project, proceed to the next step.
- 2) A joint media statement will be prepared by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry for the press. The statement will include the following:
  - a) Date and time of implementation of the program.
  - b) Location in each parish where the owner should bring his saddle for implanting the microchip.
  - c) Cost of the implant.
- 3) Method of Implanting the Microchip.  
This procedure will be accomplished by drilling a small hole in the horn of the saddle approximately 1/2" deep and filled with plastic wood.
- 4) Saddle Identification Form Requirements  
A saddle identification form must be completed in duplicate by the Livestock Brand Commission Officer or a Deputy Sheriff. The owner will receive one copy for transfer of ownership and the other copy will be housed in the Livestock Brand Commission Office as a permanent record.
- 5) This program has proven to be a success in a reduction of saddle theft in the state and it will remain in place and expanded to other areas of farm equipment.

### **CRIMESTOPPERS PROGRAM**

The Livestock Brand Commission Crimestoppers Program is another tool used to assist law enforcement agencies in detecting and combating agricultural crime and is sponsored by the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association and the Louisiana Farm Bureau. The program is made public through posters and the media.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM**

This is the most important aspect of the total program for the following reasons: the industry that we serve must know what we do, how we do it and why we provide the services and that the services we provide are cost effective to the taxpayers. This is accomplished by attending public meetings---Cattlemen, Farm Bureau, law enforcement associations, fairs and festivals.

## **GOALS**

The Livestock Brand Commission's goals are as follows:

- 1) Short Term Goal is to continue to provide annual educational enforcement training to all of our employees.
- 2) During my tenure with the department, the Livestock Brand Commission has met the goals, objectives and standards established by the uniform code and standards for law enforcement agencies.
- 3) We changed the image of our investigators by changing their uniforms to tan shirts and blue jeans with the badge worn on the shirt.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN INFORMATION**

OBJECTIVE I. The Livestock Brand Commission strives to protect and safeguard Louisiana agriculture. It comprises five major areas: theft prevention, investigative, identification, Crimestoppers Program and public relations.

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| STRATEGY 1.1 | To provide theft prevention and investigative services to a 2.176 billion dollar agriculture industry which includes the following: cattle, equine, hogs, emu, ostrich, turtle, sheep, exotic, chemicals, farm machinery and equipment. |
| STRATEGY 1.2 | To provide annual educational enforcement training to all of our employees.   |

Accountability (Performance Indicators):

- \* Total Number of Criminal Investigations
- \* Total Number of Livestock Inspected
- \* Total Number of Livestock Brands Recorded
- \* Crimestopper Cases Where Rewards Were Issued
- \* Number of Meetings, Festivals, and Fairs Attended
- \* Number of Times the Market News Was Reported
- \* Value of Stolen/Missing Property Cleared by Investigation
- \* Percent of Theft Cases Solved in Louisiana – National Average
- \* Conviction Rate

Customers:

Farmers

Cattlemen

Horsemen

Limiting Factors:

Funding

Manpower

# **MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION PROGRAM**

**OVERALL MISSION:** The mission of the Louisiana Meat and Poultry Inspection Program is to provide the consumer with a wholesome and safe meat supply.

**OBJECTIVES:** Program objectives are (1) to assure consumer receives only safe, wholesome and unadulterated meat and meat products, and (2) only properly labeled meat products (reflecting the actual ingredients) are provided to the consumer.

## **NEAR TERM GOALS:**

- (1) Inspect all animals slaughtered and/or processed in state plants.
- (2) Assure that custom facilities which slaughter and/or process individual's animals are maintained in a sanitary manner.
- (3) Enforce rules and regulations through use of a compliance program.
- (4) Maintain laboratory testing for food borne pathogens, i.e., listeria, salmonella, e coli 0157:H7.
- (5) Continue cross-utilization cooperative agreement with USDA by staffing federal plants with state personnel.
- (6) Continue testing of meat products through Chemistry Program to protect consumers from economic fraud.
- (7) Continue in plant residue testing for show animals.
- (8) Continue training for both industry and inspection under (HACCP).
- (9) Continue to provide meaningful information for inspection personnel and industry on latest inspection innovations.
- (10) Transition from Performance Based Inspection System (PBIS) to Public Health Inspection System (PHIS).

## **LONG TERM GOALS:**

- (1) Refine the Risk Assessment Program for custom facilities to better utilize inspection resources.
- (2) Expand laboratory function for testing products for both nutritional and microorganism levels.
- (3) Decrease role of inspection in everyday operation of facilities without lowering quality and safety of food products.
- (4) Develop system to use lap top computers to perform line inspection task categories under HACCP system.
- (5) Continue to provide training and up-to-date information to industry.
- (6) Continue to support efforts for interstate shipment of state products.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- 1) Passed 2009 annual review by the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service certifying that the Louisiana State Meat Inspection Program is "at least equal to" federal inspection requirements and received 50% of operating expenses from the USDA totaling \$2.1million.
- 2) Stopped the sale of livestock carcasses originating from two illegal slaughters and processing operations and prosecuted those involved.
- 3) Decreased the number of program personnel from a high of 142 in the 1990s to the present level of 43.
- 4) As required by the Federal/State cooperative agreement in 2008, established a state EIAO (Enforcement Investigations Analysis Officer) position responsible for conducting Food

Safety Assessments for all state plants. In 2009, assessments were performed in 50% of all state plants.

- 5) Continued to ensure that consumers receive only safe, wholesome and unadulterated meat and poultry products by inspecting all animals slaughtered and/or processed
- 6) Continue to provide inspection services to 7 USDA federal meat and poultry processing facilities staffed with state inspectors under a cross-utilization agreement.
- 7) Inspection personnel reviewed 100% of state plants' HACCP (Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Point) and SSOP (Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures) plans ensuring that all state and federal requirements are met.
- 8) Program headquarters established, implemented and maintains the USDA requirement for a PBIS (Performance Based Inspection System) for all processing and slaughter facilities. In 2009, began preparing and training for a new federal PHIS system to be implemented in 2011.
- 9) Continued previous years work by preventing meat and poultry products spoiled as a result of Hurricanes Gustav and Ike from entering commerce, directed the proper disposal of products that were found to be unfit for human consumption and regulated the return of safe food production to meat and poultry processing operations affected by the hurricanes.
- 10) Maintained an accredited laboratory program at Louisiana State University and adopted FSIS guidelines for testing of microorganisms, i.e. for listeria, salmonella, e-coli 0157:H7, coli form, vibriosis, and any other adulterants as well as fat content in meat products.
- 11) Management personnel continue to review and approve all meat product labels ensuring accurate ingredients, net weights, formulations, and other areas of non-food safety consumer protection concerns.
- 12) Meat Inspection Enforcement agents continue to conduct reviews of retail outlets, distribution warehouses, institutions, and other facilities handling meat products to determine if state and federal requirements are met.
- 13) Laboratory certified by USDA as a Food Emergency Response Networks (FERN) facility.

### **MEAT INSPECTION PROGRAM IMPACT**

In accordance with Louisiana Revised Statutes (RS 3:4201 – 4233) this program continues to ensure that consumers receive only safe, wholesome, unadulterated meat and poultry products that are properly labeled. The Meat and Poultry Inspection Program is a cooperative state-federal program receiving 50% of its funding from USDA. The program is responsible for inspecting all meats of animals slaughtered and processed in Louisiana facilities: inspecting and approving premises of meat facilities according to federal and state requirements: operating a federal accredited laboratory for analyses of meat samples: reviewing and approving all labels of meat and meat products to assure that accurate product information is supplied to the consumer: and investigates violations of meat and poultry regulations such as illegal slaughter, processing, and sale of uninspected meat products.

Amount of federal dollars available, FY 2008	\$2,115,172
Number of state inspected slaughter & processing facilities	81
Number of LDAF meat inspection program employees	43
Number of slaughtered livestock inspected	25,914
Pounds of meat & poultry processed and inspected	36,841,697
Number of laboratory samples monitored	1,267

Number of private sector employees

730

Annual gross sales for state inspected plants

\$ 83,000,000

State inspection program staff's four meat plants for USDA, in which a cross-utilization agreement is signed where the state is reimbursed per hour for each inspection hour provided.

### **GRADING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

Grading and Certification assures that products purchased by institutions and schools meet all Institutional Meat Purchase Specifications and general requirements for Fish and Fisheries Products.

**OBJECTIVES:** Grading and certification prevents a vendor from shipping a lower valued product than what the purchase order calls for, resulting in substantial savings for both state institutions and participating school systems. Seafood inspection and certification will allow vendors to develop markets that would have been restricted without inspection. Alligator inspection has resulted in an export market being developed, as an exporting certificate is available that importing countries require.

#### **NEAR TERM GOALS:**

- (1) Meat grading and certification servicing all state institutions and 48 school food parishes.
- (2) Seafood certification services all state institutions.
- (3) USDC Cooperative Agreement - Inspect USDC licensed plants. Write all certificates for export product.
- (4) Alligator Inspection Program - Inspect facilities and process, to insure carcass was processed in a sanitary manner. Inspector issues export certificates.
- (5) USDC Fish Meal Cooperative Agreement - Inspect fish meal plants. Take samples of product and send to Pascagoula lab to test for salmonella. Fish meal is used in pet food, fertilizer. The extracted oil is used in margarine and perfume.
- (6) Nutria Inspection and Processing - Cooperative agreement with DHH, Wildlife and Fisheries and Dept. of Agriculture to slaughter excess number of nutria which were a nuisance. (Coastal parishes)
- (7) Utilize allocated federal funds for the on going nutria program which includes incentives for trappers and processors.
- (8) Implement Act 749, which requires state agencies, public school food service and universities to self certify (HACCP) all red meat, seafood, poultry and egg.
- (9) Training for all state agencies, state institutions and local school districts operating food service facilities for students, or for patients or inmates in their custody.

#### **LONG TERM GOALS:**

Grading and certification long term:

- (1) Establish procedures to certify that the product is e coli 0157H7 free.
- (2) Verify grade of can goods to be reflective of purchase order specifications.
- (3) Block grants in lieu of commodities.

#### **Seafood Certification long term:**

- 1) Aggressively promote better utilization of under utilized species.
- (2) Work with USDC and FDA to develop export markets.

#### ACCOMPLISHED SINCE 1980

- (1) All state institutions are purchasing certified product.
- (2) Increased from 34 parish school systems to 48 under certification.
- (3) Initiate seafood certification program.
- (4) Developed series 900 poultry specifications.
- (5) Initiate USDC Cross Licensed Program.
- (6) Initiate Alligator Inspection Program shipment instate, out-of-state and export.
- (7) Initiation of nutria inspection and processing agreement between DHH, Wildlife and Fisheries and Dept. of Agriculture.
- (8) Passed Act 749 requiring state agencies, public school food service and universities to self certify all red meat, seafood and poultry.
- (9) Initiate a program to process commodities ground beef into pre cooked patties.
- (10) Write standards to increase utilization of bread type products there by increasing value added products.

## **POULTRY AND EGG DIVISION**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The overall mission of the Poultry and Egg Division is to protect the consumer and insure that the poultry, egg and poultry and egg products are wholesome and are of the quantity and quality represented on the label. The division also promotes consumer use of poultry and eggs through the Louisiana Egg Commission. Our personnel are licensed by the USDA in the following capacities:

- 12 Graders with USDA/State licenses
- 1 Graders with USDA/State licenses cross-trained from meat division
- 3 Graders with USDA/State licenses cross-trained from Fruits & Vegetables
- 2 Graders with State licenses only
- 2 Graders with State licenses only cross-trained from Fruits & Vegetables
- 1 Graders with State licenses only cross-trained from Meat Division

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **Near Term**

- Maintain cooperative agreements with USDA.
  - Provide qualified, licensed graders for all USDA poultry and egg plants in Louisiana.
  - Provide fee grading service for non USDA poultry and egg plants.
  - Provide graders to perform federal egg surveillance for Louisiana egg plants and hatcheries.
  - Perform all USDA destination inspections and reviews for poultry and eggs.
- Continue all state programs that are now in existence.
  - Contract compliance inspection for all poultry, poultry products, eggs, and egg products used by state institutions and other parish or state entities that wish to come under the Grading and Certification Program.
  - Regulate the use of the 7% and 10% Louisiana Agriculture Products Preference Law.
  - Enforce the State Egg Marketing Law.
- Work to maintain a good working relationship between the poultry integrator and the contract poultry grower.

#### **Long Term**

- Better utilization of personnel
  - Use cross-trained inspectors whenever possible.
  - Computer generated printouts of all work performed on a weekly basis. Make necessary changes to the rules and regulations governing marketing of eggs in Louisiana to make the program more workable.
- More aggressive promotions of eggs and egg products through the Louisiana Egg Commission.
- Initiate a Louisiana Egg Quality Assurance Program (See Attachments)
- Begin implementation of new cooperative agreement.
- Develop a computer program whereby the graders can generate PY 210's and PY 211's at the place of grading with USDA utilizing state employees as Assistant Federal State Supervisors.

### Contributions or New Programs Started Since 1980

- Cross utilization of personnel with each division and between divisions.
- Destination appeal grading for the military.
- Implementation of the Egg Marketing Rules and Regulations.
- Enforcement of the 7% and 10% Preference Law.
- Auditing of egg industry to insure all fees and assessments are paid.
- New State specifications for RTC poultry, poultry products, and shell eggs.
- Poultry digesters.
- State employees used as Assistant Federal Supervisors.
- Revised and updated rules and regulations for eggs.

### EGG QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

The Egg Quality Assurance Program provides the Louisiana egg producers a HACCP type of safety program. The program addresses each critical point from production to the point of consumer use and provides full verification. The program is monitored by the Poultry and Egg Division. The program consists of five (5) critical points:

- Poultry house cleaning and disinfecting;
- Rodent and Pest Elimination;
- Proper egg washing;
- Biosecurity; and
- Refrigeration.

When a producer, packer, or further processors has in place a program that addresses and gives positive proof that the above critical points are being monitored and enforced then the company can use the Quality Assurance Logo on the inner lid of the egg carton or stamped on the outside of the case if the eggs are packed loose.

### LOUISIANA EGG COMMISSION

The commission consists of nine members appointed by the Commissioner and confirmed by the Senate. Two members are active egg producers. Four members are active distributors. Two members have knowledge of the egg industry. One member is appointed from the public at large. The Commissioner, or his designee, serves as ex-officio and has all rights and responsibilities of appointed members. The Commissioner, or his designee, shall be counted for purposes of constituting a quorum. The Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry is an ex-officio member. The Commissioner appoints someone from his staff to serve as Director of the Egg Commission and the Department provides staffing for the Commission. The Commission gives the Department \$30,000.00 yearly to help offset the cost of these services.

The Egg Commission derives its funding from a \$.02/30 dozen case assessment on all eggs produced and processed in Louisiana and all eggs produced elsewhere and distributed in Louisiana. Any entity engaged in producing, packing, processing, and distributing eggs for retail must have a license. The funds are collected by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry. The funds derived from the assessments are deposited into the State Treasury, in a special fund to the credit of the Louisiana Egg Commission. All licensees can be audited yearly and must be audited at least every two years. Licensees will pay mileage and per diem.

The purpose of the Louisiana Egg Commission is to educate the consumers of Louisiana on the good nutritional value of the egg, approve and issue licensed for all entities engaged in egg production and wholesales, and to hold hearings and if necessary suspend or revoke licenses of flagrant violators.



The Egg Commission promotes eggs in many ways. Some of the on-going yearly functions are:

- Working closely with the American Egg Board on all state activities.
- Co-sponsors statewide egg cookery contest with the Louisiana State University Cooperative Extension Service.
- A yearly co-sponsor with the Louisiana Poultry Federation of egg breakfasts for the House and Senate.
- Participate in the following trade shows annually:
  - a. State Fair in Shreveport---a booth and an omelet brunch
  - b. Monroe Ag Exposition
  - c. Louisiana School Food Service annual meeting
  - d. Louisiana Dietary Association
  - e. Louisiana Restaurant Association
  - f. Christmas in the Country at St. Francisville
  - g. Brunch for Poultry Graduates and their families at LSU
- Omelets for any special functions with approval of the Commission
  - a. In store cooking demonstrations
  - b. Radio promotions

The Egg Commission has two large radio promotions, two weeks before Easter and two weeks before Christmas. Other promotions are done whenever there is an opportunity and the Commission thinks the exposure justifies the cost. In addition to the spots on local radio, the Commission works with selected stations for promotional give-aways.

The Commission purchases most of the literature and promotional gifts through the American Egg Board. Most of the radio promotions are through the Louisiana Network News as the Commission feels that LNN provides the most coverage for the dollar.

The Egg Commission meets quarterly, the third Wednesday of the first month in the quarter. Robert Yarborough, CEO of Manda Fine Meats, is the Chairman of the Louisiana Egg Commission.

## **VETERINARY HEALTH DIVISION**

### **BRUCELLOSIS**

Brucellosis eradication is the primary, most active and longest running program in this division. The brucellosis eradication program has been in existence since 1934. It is a cooperative program between this department and the USDA Veterinary Services division. Progress in actually eliminating brucellosis from Louisiana's cattle population began in the early 1980's and has progressed to Louisiana being declared Brucellosis Free by USDA on August 3, 2000. This is a great accomplishment in light of the fact that this state had more than 1,000 known infected herds in 1981.

Obviously, Louisiana has a strong brucellosis program. A very extensive surveillance (testing) program and calfhood vaccinations have been two key components to a successful program. Cooperation and support by the industry has made a good program successful. Continuing a surveillance and vaccination program is necessary to insure that the progress made is maintained since the disease is still present in neighboring states. Second point testing (or slaughter surveillance) will continue with identification of cattle leaving for slaughter as an aid for tracebacks.

With reduction in federal money the vaccination program is essentially 100% in the hands of regulatory personnel. Some private practicing veterinarians are paid for performing brucellosis vaccinations.

### **EQUINE INFECTIOUS ANEMIA (EIA)**

Louisiana has the most comprehensive advanced progressive program in the country. This program, particularly the individual identification requirement, has attracted nationwide attention and Louisiana is considered a pioneer in control and eradication of the disease.

Highlights of the program include:

1. Permanent individual identification by electronic implant, hot brand, freeze brand, or tattoo.
2. Removal of positive horses from the population.
3. Required annual testing of all horses.
4. Quarantining and retesting of all horses in the area around any positive horse.
5. A change of ownership test done within the past six months.

All routine testing is done by the private sector. Regulatory personnel quarantine, identify, and retest positive horses as well as conduct epidemiology studies and test horses that may be exposed to the disease. Since January 1, 2010, we have joined Oklahoma to push forward with a more sensitive test at the initial equine laboratory. An enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) has been performed as the first point of testing. This again leads the way in locating the last foci of these horses.

### **OTHER TESTS**

Our division has listened to and responded to the needs of the Louisiana cattle industry. From the summer of 2009 to present we have instituted testing cattle for Trichomoniasis, a venereal disease of many species. In cattle herds, calf loss can exceed 80%, a severe economic blow to the Louisiana cattlemen. We have had meetings and laboratories to inform producers and veterinarians about the difficulties with testing. New regulatory rules have been made, similar to

all other states west of the Mississippi River, to require testing of bulls entering the state. Plans are being made for intrastate movement testing associated with sales. In-state voluntary testing has shown approximately 36% positive of 125 bulls tested.

The Veterinary Health Services Division has also enforced its plenary power to prevent animal diseases by quarantining a barn of horses that were exposed to Equine Herpes Virus I. This action was a successful integration with private veterinarians, the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine and the Louisiana Racing Commission. Currently, we are involved in two diseases that will be changing the equine world, both considered foreign animal diseases, but may become diseases present permanently in the United States— Contagious Equine Metritis and Equine Piroplasmiasis. Our veterinarians are not only busy in the field with these two diseases but work on national committees to establish new regulations for each disease.

70,000 horses were tested for EIA in 2003. This number is up compared to the 39,000 to 42,000 tested yearly from 1990 - 1995. The chart below summarizes the success of the program since 1999.

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
# of Infected Horses	112	125	49	26	17	31	16	10	12	3	2

### **TUBERCULOSIS**

Louisiana has been classified as TB free since July 19, 1994. This state is actively involved in the national bovine TB eradication program. Although, we have been classified free, we continue with a testing and strong slaughter surveillance program to maintain the free status we have achieved.

The Veterinary Health Division is presently addressing potential and existing TB problems in farm raised cervidae species and zoos with rules and regulations and testing programs.

### **PSEUDORABIES AND SWINE BRUCELLOSIS**

Louisiana is involved in the national swine pseudorabies eradication program. We have advanced from a Class I to a Class V, which is a free status since October, 15, 2003. The surveillance part of the program consists of an enhanced identification (tagging) program at stockyards to increase trace back capability and the collecting and testing of blood samples at the State's auction markets. The testing of herds from which positive animals are traced is handled by State/Federal regulatory personnel.

The State is classified as Class III in the swine brucellosis eradication program and is considered free status. Surveillance for the disease is handled in the same manner as pseudorabies. All blood samples drawn from swine are automatically tested for pseudorabies and brucellosis.

### **POULTRY**

Louisiana continues to participate in the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) program. The State's poultry flocks are classified free of Salmonella typhoid and Salmonella pullorum. Testing for these diseases continues as a surveillance tool to maintain the free status. Regulatory personnel do the testing and provide training to Extension Service personnel and others involved parties to maintain a good surveillance program.

Dead poultry disposal is regulated by the Veterinary Health Division and Division personnel are involved in approval of disposal facilities and replying to inquiries concerning proper disposal. The Louisiana Poultry Diagnostic Laboratory monitors diseases that can affect the poultry industry and have devastating effects on a cascade of Louisiana industries.

### **SHEEP**

In conjunction with USDA, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry has developed and implemented a Certified Scrapie Free flock program. Scrapie is a disease of sheep classified as a Transmissible Spongiform Encephalomyopathy (TSE) which affects the brain. The causative agent is believed to be a misshapened protein (prion) similar to the prion that causes Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in cattle and Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in deer. Samples are submitted for Scrapie, BSE and CWD as part of a nationwide surveillance plan.

### **ALTERNATIVE LIVESTOCK**

The Veterinary Health Division has developed and implemented rules and regulation dealing with Alternative Livestock (Imported exotic deer and antelope, elk, and farm raised white tailed deer.) This program deals with the harvesting, enclosure systems, disease control and commercial activities of this emerging industry. The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry is working with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries in this program.

There are approximately 425 permitted alternative livestock producers as of January 1, 2010. Disease monitoring, control and certification programs have been developed and implemented for such diseases as brucellosis, tuberculosis and CWD.

### **PET TURTLE**

Louisiana Pet Turtle industry producers and markets 10 to 12 million turtles annually. This product is sold in its entirety in foreign markets since the sale of pet turtles is banned in the United States. A technique has been developed to treat the turtle eggs and kill bacterial infestation thus leaving bacteria free turtles to be hatched. Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry personnel sample, submit for testing and provide documentation of negative test to insure that treatment procedures are working. There are 65 licensed pet turtle producers in Louisiana.

Veterinary Health Division Personnel are involved in an extensive cross utilization effort within the Office of Animal Health and Food Safety. Personnel have been trained to do brand inspections, meat inspections, fruit and vegetable inspections and collect auction market report data. These services are provided on a part time basis as needed.

## **OFFICE OF ANIMAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY**

During the 2009 Legislative Session, the Office of Marketing was dissolved and the following boards were moved to the Office of Animal Health and Food Safety.

### **LOUISIANA CATFISH PROMOTION & RESEARCH BOARD**

Established in R.S. 3:558.1-558.13 for the purpose of providing a voluntary method of raising revenues to be used for the purposes of developing markets for Louisiana catfish and for funding research and educational activities for the Louisiana catfish industry. When assessments are approved by a simple majority of the catfish farmers voting in a referendum, the department will collect assessments on all catfish feed sold in Louisiana to catfish farmers at the rate of \$2.00 per ton. The department will retain 3% of the assessment collected for administrative costs and transfer the balance to the board.

Division staff provides administrative support to the board and implements all promotion projects and activities approved by the board. When assessments are levied or imposed, staff will also provide financial reports to the board detailing all assessments collected, refunds to farmers and funds transferred to the board to cover their administrative costs and to fund promotion and research projects.

### **LOUISIANA STRAWBERRY MARKETING BOARD**

Established in R.S. 3:471-478, now listed as R.S. 3:730.1-730.8 to promote the general well being of the strawberry industry of the state of Louisiana by promoting increased production and quality in Louisiana strawberries through marketing and research; by expanding the market for Louisiana strawberries through promotion and marketing; by increasing the consumption of strawberries in Louisiana through advertising, promotion and marketing; by providing producers, distributors, retailers and consumers with educational information as to the nutritional and health value of strawberries, and by performing any other act deemed advisable in promoting this industry and the general welfare of the people of this state.

The department collects an assessment that is levied on all strawberries produced in Louisiana or produced elsewhere and distributed in Louisiana. For all strawberries sold by volume or dry measure, this assessment is levied on each pint, or equivalent, of strawberries in the amount of \$.00165 for each pint. For all strawberries sold by weight, this assessment is levied on each pound of strawberries in the amount of \$.00185 per pound. Assessments are remitted to the department by dealers and supplies of containers used for Louisiana produced strawberries and by retailers for strawberries produced elsewhere and sold in Louisiana.

The board working with the department implements all promotional campaigns for advertising, publicizing, projects, and activities for promoting the increased consumption of Louisiana strawberries. The department also provides financial reports to the board detailing all assessments collected and funds transferred to the board to cover administrative costs and to fund promotional endeavors.

## **LOUISIANA CRAWFISH PROMOTION AND RESEARCH BOARD**

Established in R.S. 3:556.1-556.13 for the purpose of providing a voluntary method of raising revenues to be used to develop markets for Louisiana crawfish and for funding research which will increase production of Louisiana crawfish. The department collects assessments on all crawfish bags sold in Louisiana to crawfish farmers and harvesters at the rate of 2.0 cents per bag and on all artificial bait sold in Louisiana at the rate of 1/4 cent per pound (\$5/ton). The assessments are paid by crawfish farmers and harvesters at the first point of sale and remitted to the department on a quarterly basis by the manufacturer or distributor. Each farmer or harvester who purchases bags or artificial bait in Louisiana may obtain a refund of the assessments by submitting a written request within fifteen days after the end of the quarter in which the bait or bags were purchased. Copies of sales receipts or invoices showing the amount of bait or bags purchased must accompany the request. The department retains 3% of the assessment collected for administrative costs and transfers the balance to the board.

Department staff provides financial reports to the board detailing all assessments collected, refunds to farmers and harvesters and funds transferred to the board to cover their administrative costs and to fund promotion and research projects.



## **OFFICE OF FORESTRY**

**WADE DUBEA, STATE FORESTER AND ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER**  
**(225)925-4500**

**Michael Thomas, Forest Management Chief**

**Don Smith, Jr., Forest Protection Chief**

**Charlie Greer, Enforcement Chief**

**Randy Rentz, Reforestation Chief**

**Epney Brasher, Information and Education Chief**

**Gus Rowland, GIS Project Supervisor**

**Jeremy Coffey, Aviation Chief Pilot**

## OFFICE OF FORESTRY

The mandate of the Office of Forestry is to protect, conserve, and replenish the natural resources of the state...(RS 3:4271).

To meet this mandate, the Office of Forestry has seven branches, or divisions, whose responsibilities are to carry out the agency's variety of programs. These branches are: Forest Protection, Forest Management, Information/Education & Urban Forestry, Reforestation, Geographic Information Services, Enforcement and Aviation. Administration of the agency and direct oversight of the Forestry Enforcement section is carried out through the State Forester's Office.

Louisiana's forestlands - covering 45% of the state's area, or 13.9 million acres - are over 90% privately-owned, with the small and medium-sized owners controlling a vast majority of this forestland. This renewable resource provides the raw material for Louisiana's second largest manufacturing employer - the forest products industry - with over 900 firms in 45 parishes directly employing almost 20,000 people, with another 8,000 employed in the harvesting and transportation of the resource. Louisiana's forests provide a multitude of other benefits, including clean air and water, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities and scenic beauty.

With adequate protection, followed by appropriate and accepted forest management techniques, Louisiana's forests are available to serve our state, both rural and urban, not only on a sustained basis, but at an increased level of productivity. With the various interests and needs of so many owners, an effort to encourage and promote sound forestry practices on such a vast area requires a balanced educational process.

To meet the tree seedling requirements of both commercial forestry operations as well as the needs of urban forestry, this agency operates three tree seedling nurseries and three seed orchards where genetically improved slash and loblolly pine seed are produced.

With few exceptions, Forestry personnel are cross-utilized in all program areas to better enable the agency to carry out its responsibilities at an optimum level. The agency's personnel complement has fallen from a high of almost 600 employees in 1982 to a consistent level of about 230 full-time employees. In spite of this decreased manpower, the agency has continued to provide and expand its services through training, mechanization, technology, and recruiting. New challenges constantly arise and the agency adapts its policies, personnel and other resources to meet those demands. Personnel complement remains critically low in some parts of the state, and both forest protection and service delivery could be enhanced with additional personnel.

Since the Louisiana Legislature passed the Forest Protection Tax, which levied an eight (8) cents per acre tax on forestland, that revenue has allowed the agency to upgrade the primary firefighting equipment and provide increased activities in insect & disease detection and control, along with other activities, such as Best Management Practices to protect forest soils and water.



## **ALEXANDER STATE FOREST**

In 1923, with the purchase of 2,068 acres for \$12,500, the Alexander State Forest was established. Additional purchases over the ensuing years resulted in the State Forest enlarging to approximately 8,000 acres. This multi-use forest contains 700 acres of bottomland hardwood area, 2,250 acres in Indian Creek Lake and Recreation Area, and the remaining 5,000 acres in loblolly, slash and longleaf pine areas. Mostly barren land when originally purchased, extensive tree-planting was undertaken especially when a CCC camp was located on the Forest during 1933 - 1940. Today the entire Forest is an excellent example of reforestation, containing about 35 million board feet of timber with approximately 1.5 million board feet harvested annually. During the CCC days, the enrollees, mostly World War I veterans, built the log administrative building, which is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The 175-foot Woodworth Fire Tower at the Headquarters Compound is believed to be the tallest fire tower in the world. Approximately 75% of the State Forest acreage is managed for hunting and other recreational activities. A thriving population of Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers, and endangered species, is located on the State Forest.

## **INDIAN CREEK RECREATION AREA**

With a 2,250 acre lake, the Recreation Area also has 100 acres of developed recreation facilities and a 250 acre primitive camping area. A joint venture of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the Rapides Parish Police Jury, and the Lower West Red River Soil and Water Conservation District, the reservoir was constructed for agricultural irrigation in times of need and for recreation purposes. The Recreation Area camping area contains 109 campsites with conventional full utility hookups, 3 beaches for swimming, bathhouses, an excellent boat launch ramp, and 75 picnic sites.

## **MANAGEMENT BRANCH**

### ***Forest Landowner Assistance Program***

There are more than 148,000 woodland owners in Louisiana. Many of them are unaware of the benefits of forestry as it concerns them, and are, as a consequence, removing the valuable timber resource from their land without thought of the future. As the designated public agency in the field of forestry, it is the Office of Forestry's responsibility to render services for improvement.

The objective of our woodland assistance program is to place under improved forest practice as many as possible of the small timber tracts and farm woodlots in the state. This can generally be done through personal, individual contacts. Agency contacts and public media should, of course, be used to the fullest extent. However, the forester's time is spent in the field furnishing forest owners with full information about their timber and giving them necessary advice and action. Included is assistance in the form of necessary advice and recommendations in regard to both present and future courses of action, timber marking, timber sale contracts, cutting inspections, insect and disease problems, federal and state cost-share programs, tax consequences, and planning for regeneration prior to harvest. Follow-ups are often necessary to insure that proper forest practices are carried out.

Act 1377 of the Regular Session of the 1997 Louisiana Legislature created the Louisiana Forestry Productivity Program (FPP). FPP became effective July 1, 1998 to provide financial assistance to eligible landowners for establishing and improving a crop of trees. This program has helped offset a landowner's expenses by sharing the cost of implementing specific forestry practices designed to produce a timber crop. This program distributes approximately \$3,000,000 in cost share funding to almost 1000 Louisiana forest landowners annually. A secondary result of this program is that it practically doubled the number of landowner assists that the agency provides. Since 1998 FPP has cost-shared with 13,346 landowners, a grand total of \$33,243,669.67 and has planted over 309,004 acres and improved over 424,325 acres.

The Forest Stewardship Program promotes the wise use and management of resources that maintain and enhance the value of the forests for present and future generations. It recognizes and rewards landowners who are managing their forestlands according to multiple-use concepts. It is also a means by which landowners have access to resource management professionals to assist them in obtaining written forest management plans, which address multiple-use management.

The federally funded Forest Lands Enhancement Program provides up to 75% of the cost of carrying out certain forest management practices that complement the Louisiana FPP program. These funds will be used for multiple use forestry practices not covered by other USDA and state program, such as Southern Pine Beetle control, invasive species control, and wildfire and catastrophic risk reduction and rehabilitation.

Accomplishments over the previous five (5) years in the forest landowner assistance program are as follows:

<b>Forest Management Accomplishments</b>				
F.Y.	Management Plans Number	Acres	Cult. Treatment (Planting & TSI)	Prescribed Burning Acres
2004-05	2,197	80,279	31,776	26,282
2005-06	3,325	91,566	49,390	18,290
2006-07	1,414	64,305	40,738	20,354
2007-08	864	49,470	28,035	18,119
2008-09	3,041	39,789	17,062	16,148

## ***Insect and Disease Program***

The insect and disease program is primarily responsible for the prevention, detection, and control of insects and diseases affecting forestland in Louisiana. The thrust of this program has centered on the detection, ground checking and control of the Southern Pine Beetle. Since beetle populations are cyclic, one can speculate that the potential for increasing population levels will continue. A risk reduction program has been implemented to improve the health and vigor of forest stands by providing cost-share assistance for practices such as prescribed burning and non-commercial thinning.

Aerial inspections are made throughout the year to locate infestations and to determine the extent of any insect or disease problem. All pine types are flown approximately every four to six weeks from late spring to early fall, which is equivalent to inspecting 40 million acres annually. Other annual survey flights and ground reconnaissance checks are conducted for recurring and “new” pests such as the forest tent caterpillar, emerald ash borer, cypress leafroller, pine sawfly, and the hackberry psyllid. The agency also places and collects approximately 200 gypsy moth traps each summer. New forest threats such as the Sudden Oak Death organism are carefully monitored.

The general public is kept informed of pest affect on forestland in the State by news releases and brochures on identification, prevention, and control of insect and disease pests.

In 1998, the Southern Annual Forest Inventory System (SAFIS) was formed in cooperation with USDA Forest Service with the goal of employing state forestry personnel for collecting the field data necessary to accurately determine the volume and status of our statewide forest resource. This new system will replace the periodic inventory assessment that was scheduled on a 10 year rotation with a continuous inventory process that will sample the entire state every five years and provide annual updates to existing inventory data.

Louisiana Office of Forestry staff personnel have completed data collection on approximately 80% of the state, and the USDA Forest Service is currently editing, compiling, and analyzing that data which will result in the publication of updated Louisiana forest inventory data in the coming months. With current staffing levels, we expect to have collected all statewide data before the end of 2005 and will then continue by collecting new data on the oldest plot series.

## **FOREST PROTECTION BRANCH**

The primary objectives of the Forest Protection Branch are the detection, suppression and prevention of wildfires in the forestlands of Louisiana. There are 18.9 million acres of land under fire protection by the agency. Our wildfire occurrence is high by regional and national standards. Without the efforts and dedication of the Office of Forestry, the losses from these wildfires would be catastrophic.

For the five-year period, 2004-2008, our records show an average of 2,157 wildfires, which burn 23,774 acres of forestland each year. In addition to the destruction of valuable forestland and impacts on the economy through the loss of this important resource, wildfires seriously threaten countless rural structures, i.e., homes, barns and equipment on a daily basis.

Additionally, multi-million dollar value of other property is severely threatened but damage is prevented by timely and effective wildfire suppression. The threat to loss of life is immeasurable.

Although wildfire occurrence has diminished over the last four years, the Wildland fire potential remains high and our remembrance of the 2000 fire season when 5,224 fires burned 96,612 acres has not been forgotten.

The Office of Forestry utilizes airplanes to detect wildfires as soon as possible. Our suppression forces consist of transport trucks and crawler tractors equipped with fireplows. Approximately 68 two-person fire crews are strategically placed around the state. Another 12 to 24 crews would be needed to bring the agency up to a suppression level capable of dealing with normal fire occurrence in an efficient manner. We continue to see a reduction in the numbers of forest industry cooperator crews who once assisted the state in fire suppression activities. This reduction in fire control personnel places additional responsibility on state firefighting resources and makes current manpower levels even less adequate.

The Forest Protection branch also operates the support services for this statewide operation. We inspect, maintain, and repair our fleet of fire detection aircraft at our State Forest facility. A mobile radio system, including repeaters linking all parishes to their Headquarters is a vital component of our operation, and three technicians stationed around the state design, install and maintain this equipment and the communications network.

Louisiana is a member of the South Central States Forest Fire Compact. This organization administers emergency fire control cooperation between the states and in our region. We maintain communication with other states to assure that the fire control resources are available within the region in the event of catastrophic fire situations.

The Federal Excess Personal Property program (FEPP) is administered by the Forest Protection Branch. This program, in cooperation with the U. S. Forest Service, obtains federal property that is loaned to Volunteer Fire Departments across the state to aid them in their fire control efforts. The Department utilizes a considerable amount of applicable equipment secured through this program well. Screeners travel across the southern United States to locate, acquire, and transport this equipment back to Louisiana. The program requires ongoing inventory and management of equipment acquired over many years of program participation.

### **FORESTRY LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The Office of Forestry's Law Enforcement program was established in 1941 to provide protection for the forested areas of our state by enforcing forestry laws.

Louisiana's history of wildfire is not only well known but embarrassing. Latest wildfire statistics reflect an average of 1,897 wildfires which consume 20,313 acres occur each year.

Over 99 percent of these are man caused. Approximately 77 percent of all fires are intentionally set by arsonists. To our knowledge, this percentage of arson related fires is the highest in the nation. A strong specialized law enforcement and prevention program is the only deterrent to these criminal acts.

Timber theft continues to be reported at an alarming rate, although we honestly believe we are currently receiving complaints on only a small portion of the actual losses. These

complaints require the major portion of our Enforcement Officers' time. The Enforcement Division completes an average of approximately 147 investigations per year with losses usually reaching one million dollars. They usually carry an active caseload of 60 to 80 investigations with identified losses between six hundred thousand and one million dollars. Losses of two million dollars or more are not uncommon.

As identified in our previous Sunset Review reports, the effort to have the Office of Forestry Enforcement Division charged as having primary responsibility for the investigation and collection of information relative to timber theft and to aid other police agencies in such investigations has been enacted by the Legislature. Additionally, in 1997 the Legislature passed two pieces of Legislation (14:211 Prompt Payment and 14:212 False Statement); these new criminal statutes have greatly aided us in prosecuting and resolving timber thefts.

Act 9 of the 1999 session requires documentation to be kept on all loads of forest products from the woods to the mill. Rules and regulations mandating this information be collected and maintained by wood receiving facilities and loggers to provide documentation of the movement of severed timber are not in effect. This information coupled with the False Statement statute has greatly enhanced our Enforcement Officers in establishing the chain of evidence required by our courts for successful prosecution. Private landowners in Louisiana, whose complaints make up over 90% of our caseload, certainly need these actions along with a specialized Enforcement Division that possesses the expertise and knowledge to conduct and/or assist other enforcement agencies with arduous, lengthy and difficult investigations.

### **REFORESTATION BRANCH**

Two of forestry's greatest challenges are the increasing demand for forest resources and a decreasing forest land base. In the past several years this demand has been compounded by a major shift in forest production from the Northwest United States to the Southern United States. This shift has put even more pressure on forest production in Louisiana.

Not only are the demands for forest products like lumber, paper, furniture, and a host of other items made directly from trees, but the demands on other forest resources continue to press, such as those for recreational opportunity, soil and water conservation, wetland conservation, and wildlife habitat, as the resource continues to shrink. These along with the now growing demand for bio-fuel production along with water quality and carbon sequestration, planting have brought about new challenges in the management and continued production of forest products in Louisiana.

Competition for land use continues to at a rapid pace and the number of acres available for growing and harvesting trees is reduced as more and more of those acres are converted to agriculture, highways, and real estate with the continued urban development in Louisiana.

#### ***Nursery Operations***

The Office of Forestry is charged with helping meet the challenge of producing more raw wood products on less acreage, along with restoration of native habitats and conservation efforts. Among the most direct ways this agency contributes toward this solution is through the Reforestation Branch.

The Reforestation Branch includes 22 full time positions in three nurseries and three seed orchards. During the lifting season, the planting season, and the pine cone collection seasons, an additional 60-80 seasonal jobs are filled from the local communities.

The Office of Forestry's nursery program is the focus of the reforestation effort in Louisiana. Research has indicated that Louisiana's unique geography and climate make this state's forest lands potentially the most productive in the South for pine species. This Office's four nurseries grow some 25 million pine seedlings per year to meet the demands of the state's forest landowners. This represents enough seedlings to replant approximately 40,000 acres of productive forestland per year.

With an increased awareness of the need to reforest marginal farmlands, return dwindling wetlands back to viable habitat, coastal protection efforts, maintain and improve water quality, and provide functional habitat for both wildlife and recreation, the need for quality native hardwoods is increasing. As a result, the Office of Forestry has increased annual production of hardwood seedling to 4-5 million seedlings. This is enough seedlings to reforest approximately 17,000 acres back to productive hardwood forests. To increase this production, the Office of Forestry has also begun planting hardwood seed orchards to produce seed for genetically improved hardwood seedlings designed for Louisiana needs.

The Reforestation Branch is somewhat unique to state government in that the budget is supported through seedling sales. All seedlings are sold at production costs. This insures the Louisiana landowners get quality seedling designed for Louisiana's growing conditions at a reasonable cost to them at no expense to the state. The nursery program provides approximately 35% of the state's seedling market. The private sector is designed to carry most of the corporate needs, and has limited sales to the small non-industrial landowners. Their seed orchard production and marketing is not designed to carry that market, which consists of many, many small orders for individual owners.

Seedling productions for the last five years are:

<b>FISCAL YEAR</b>	<b>PINE</b>	<b>HARDWOOD</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
2004-05	20,136,000	3,496,000	23,632,000
2005-06	22,080,000	4,981,000	27,061,000
2006-07	16,495,000	3,523,000	20,018,000
2007-08	17,540,000	4,025,000	21,565,000
2008-09	25,007,000	2,838,000	27,845,000

Projected seedling production for 2010-11 is 22,000,000 pine and 5,000,000 hardwood seedlings. We are anticipating a somewhat sluggish demand in the near future for pine due to the economic difficulties and lower prices. This however is not the futuristic outlook due to increased demand for bio-fuels and an improving market. This will mean shorter rotations and higher demand for pine seedlings. The demand for hardwood seedlings is increasing due to conservation, coastal restoration, mitigation, and carbon banking efforts.

To produce quality tree seedlings the nursery program must maintain the permanent personnel allotment, equipment, facilities, and production acreage at a level that will allow us to

manage our nurseries on a proper crop rotation to insure quality, healthy seedlings and allow us to maintain Best Nursery Practices to protect our environmental integrity. We must also explore new technology to improve our efficiency in crop harvesting, packaging and shipping, to insure that the Louisiana landowners get the best product possible, at the most reasonable price.

### ***Tree Improvement Program***

In order to produce millions of quality tree seedlings, designed specifically for Louisiana's commercial forests, we are actively involved with continuing tree improvement programs. The Office of forestry began tree improvement in 1969 and was one of the charter members of the Western Gulf Forest Tree Improvement Program Cooperative that year. Through this cooperative, we began our superior pine program by screening superior pine trees to be parents from the state's forests to be parents of a new generation of high production trees. This resulted in today's Louisiana Superior and Advanced Generation Loblolly and Slash Pine seedlings which offer a gain of up to 34% for Loblolly and 48% for Slash over wood's run seedlings. We also now maintain one of the few viable improved Longleaf orchards in the south. This is a continuing process of testing the seedlings and removing undesirable parents and introducing new parents to keep refining the disease resistance, growth rate, desirable wood properties, desirable shape of the trees, resistance to insect attacks, etc. Although this is normal a function of Research and Development, we keep it as part of our production orchard, in order to keep costs down. The main species we are currently focused with are Loblolly Pine (this is the most prevalent pine in Louisiana), Slash Pine (this is grown in the southern areas of the state), and Longleaf Pine (this was part of the original virgin forests of the state). We are currently testing and establishing several species of hardwood into our production orchards. This is important because the most limiting factor in increasing hardwood seedling production is seed availability.

We are anticipating a steady increase in demand especially for the pine species and we are in the process of increasing the acreage of seed production orchards. In order to keep at the cutting edge of seedling production, the Tree Improvement Program must continually improve the performance of our seedling through testing, rouging, breeding, and producing quality seeds. This requires that their personnel levels, equipment, facilities, and orchard acreage be maintained to meet their mission. There is no outside source available to produce seeds able to meet the needs of the unique growing conditions of the State of Louisiana. It would take approximately 15 - 20 years to start up a brand new seed production orchard.

### **INFORMATION/EDUCATION & URBAN FORESTRY**

The Information and Education program is concerned with increasing public awareness of the values of forest resources and the need for management and protection from insects, diseases and fire as well as the services our agency provides the public.

Emphasis is placed on: (1) educating landowners about profitable timber management activities and available Office of Forestry assistance; (2) promoting good stewardship of both urban and rural forest resources for soil, water, air, wildlife, and aesthetic benefits; (3) encouraging management of urban area natural resources to improve their attractiveness to both existing and prospective residents and businesses; (4) supporting efforts to attract new wood-based industries and expand product manufacturing diversity within the state; (5) educating classroom teachers about Louisiana's forest resources to increase their awareness and knowledge of the forest environment through Project Learning Tree, a national environmental education program (6) promote wildfire prevention through the Firewise Communities USA

program.

The following are some performance indicators of accomplishments in Information/Education over the past five years.

Literature distributed	1,000,153
Urban Forestry Projects	180
Project Learning Tree Workshops	103
Project Learning Tree Educators trained	2,398
Project Learning Tree Exhibits	52

### ***Urban Forestry***

The Office of Forestry has had an Urban Forestry program for 25 years. Partial base funding is provided by a yearly allocation from the U.S. Forest Service.

The agency administers an urban and community forestry grant program. This grant program provides 50/50 matching funds to local communities and/or non-profit urban forestry organizations. These monies are used for urban forestry program development, for tree planting, and tree maintenance, public education and training. Approximately \$150,000 yearly is allocated from the U. S. Forest Service to the Department for this grant program.

The Office of Forestry has two full-time urban foresters. These personnel provide technical assistance, training education, program direction and grants management on a statewide basis. Currently there is a need for an additional urban forestry specialist in Southwest Louisiana.

Urban Forestry is the establishment, management and protection of the forests that grow in and around our rapidly expanding urban areas. These forests in Louisiana are comprised of hundreds of thousands of trees valued at many millions of dollars. The benefits to people derived from these trees are immeasurable. Besides the obvious aesthetic value of trees, they help cool and clean the air, shade buildings and reduce energy demands for cooling, and positively reduce stormwater runoff and flooding. They are keys to enhancing the quality of life in urban areas.

The latest demographic information indicates that soon 80% of our population will be living in our urban and suburban areas. This percentage is expected to continue to increase during the next century. These rapidly expanding urban centers are literally consuming large amounts of commercially important forest and agricultural lands. The results are large areas with reduced vegetation and increased hard surface. This results in ever increasing flood, air quality, and heat island effects. In other words, as our urban areas enlarge, they become less livable in very real ways. Recent research has lead to the conclusion that the management of a healthy, diverse, and abundant urban forest is the most cost effective way to moderate these negative impacts.

The Office of Forestry's urban forestry efforts assisted by the Louisiana Urban Forestry Council provides critical statewide leadership in Urban Forestry. A very few communities in Louisiana have the technical expertise on staff to manage their urban forests alone. Few communities have the revenue sources to fund adequate urban forestry programs. Most of them continue to rely on the Office of Forestry for leadership and technical expertise.



In the past 4 years, the Office of Forestry has provided urban forestry assistance to 180 different communities in Louisiana. A total of over 200 separate urban forestry projects were serviced. In addition during the past 5 years, 62 different grants were administered under the urban and community forestry grant program.

### **GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SERVICES**

The Louisiana Office of Forestry, recognizing the potential of Geographic Information Systems in the practice of applied Forestry techniques, established the GIS Section during the winter of 2008 in an effort to provide a resource of technological support for the other Forestry branches. The primary tasks of the GIS Section are to assist in digital data collection efforts and production, to provide a source for the most current statewide digital data sets, to distribute new technologies and assist in field training, to create Forestry oriented map and web service products, and representation of the Office of Forestry in statewide, regional, and national settings involved with GIS or spatial data and its impact on the interests of the Louisiana Office of Forestry.

Throughout each year, the Louisiana Office of Forestry GIS Section participates in data assimilation and analysis. Annual wildfire data interpretation, digital representation and attribution of management program implementation, and federal reporting on spatial-based data are typical products. The GIS Section also handles public requests for GIS data associated with Office of Forestry.

Additionally, the Louisiana Office of Forestry is the primary center of GIS technology for the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry and regularly provides support to other, adjacent offices as the need arises. In the past, Forestry GIS personnel have assisted in EPA Project 319 data collection and interpretation, department asset mapping, and marketing and informational layouts.

Since its inception, the GIS Section has focused on improving the ability of the State's foresters to collect and attribute field data. The section has pushed the latest GIS technologies into the field and offered technical instruction and advice to improve efficiency and accuracy in reporting the efforts and accomplishments of the Office's foresters statewide.

Forestry GIS staff has trained and continue to maintain preparedness in fire incident management (FIMT) technologies, airborne data creation, and fire risk assessment technologies. The GIS Section is also actively broadening the capacity of the GIS platform to assist in the creation of management program planning and data creation.

## **AVIATION DIVISION**

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry – Office of Forestry; recognizing the cross-utilization history and potential uses of what was typically the Forest Protection Branch – Aircraft Detection Fleet, established an Aviation Section Branch during the Spring of 2009 in an effort to provide a platform and support for all branches within the Office of Forestry that have need of this service.

The primary objective and principle use of the Aviation Section is to support the Protection Branch through the use of aerial detection to search for wildfires in the 18.9 million acres of forestlands under the protection of our agency. During a typical patrol flight LDAF-Pilots scan the horizon first, for known smoke types to locate fires that have been turned into the district as a controlled burn and secondly, for fires of an unknown nature. LDAF-Pilots have training and years of acquired specialized experience that play a key role once smoke is spotted. Fire and surrounding areas are scouted and the potential threat assessed; if required crews can be directed to the fire by the most direct routes and help with the placement of men and equipment on the fire can be given. The Aviation Section performs over 4000 flight hours per year. A random sampling review of our Aerial Fire Detection Report's indicates that from May 2009 until August 2009, statewide a total of 1449 "smokes" were detected, evaluated or investigated and only 220 were determined to need suppression. This clearly shows that 85% of all "smokes" that were seen during that time were intentional "controlled burns" of some type and did not require fire crew personnel. Thus the bulk of what we do is performed in order that the precious time and valuable resources of our ground crews are focused on serious threats instead of countless man-hours being wasted.

Throughout a typical year our secondary objective is to support the Management Branch by providing aerial platform whereby observations and inspections to locate insect infestations can be made. Parish Foresters typically ride along when a "Bug Flight" is performed; in this way the Aviation Section can help the Management Branch in the prevention, detection, and control of insects and diseases. All pine types are flown on a schedule during the late spring to early fall for the Southern Pine and Ips beetles; during the spring flights are conducted over the swampy regions looking for signs of Forest Tent Caterpillar and Cypress Leaf Roller's. Flights have also been conducted to verify logging operations and Best Management Practices.

Increasingly flights are beginning to be performed in conjunction with Office of Forestry-GIS using aerial digital sketch-mapping computers to assist other Branches within the Office of Forestry. We are being used more as an aerial platform from which personnel can map occurrences. For example, after a bad fire we fly GIS-trained personnel to map the area in order to acquire and retain an accurate depiction of the area affected. Similarly, we can fly urban areas after storms with the same personnel to locate and tract storm or natural disaster damages and changes to topography.

Aerial surveillance has been used in the past to assist the Enforcement Branch especially when collecting photographic evidence that shows the damaging effects of wildfires as well as direction of fire movement and location of origin. Aerial images can be taken by Enforcement to verify actual logging areas versus the contracted area to protect the landowner from timber theft.

# **OFFICE OF FORESTRY**

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **OFFICE OF FORESTRY**

**MISSION:** The mission of the Office of Forestry is to protect, conserve, and replenish the state's forest resources.

**GOAL:** The goal of the program is to ensure the sustained high level of production of wood fiber while enhancing the recreational, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and air quality values of forestlands. Protection and management of these valuable forestlands is necessary for future generations. Trees are Louisiana's number one crop and forestry is a major contributor to Louisiana's economy. Approximately 25,000 employees work in forestry-related jobs. In 2002, Louisiana landowners received over \$570 million for forest products sold and removed from their lands. Severance tax receipts amounted to over \$16.4 million C 75% of which was returned to the parish from which the timber was severed and 25% of which went into the state general fund. To carry out this mission, the Forestry Program conducts an intensive fire detection effort for the 18,931,000 acres under protection. The Office operates nine detection aircraft in the northern half of the state and operates nine aircraft and maintains forty fire towers in the southern half of the state. As aerial detection effectiveness increases, the number of active fire towers will continue to decline. Forestry investigates arson, timber theft and other forestry-related crimes. The Forestry Program also conducts a surveillance program for Southern Pine Beetle infestation. The Forestry Program provides technical assistance for private forestland owners to encourage use of sound forestry practices. The forest tree seedling nurseries and seed orchard provide private forestland owners a reliable source of quality tree seedlings. The Program also provides Urban Forestry expertise to Louisiana cities and communities. And the agency uses conservation education to further understanding and protection of the state's forest resources.

**OBJECTIVE 1**      **Maintain a 13 acre average fire size and minimize structure & property loss relating to wildfire.**

**STRATEGY 1.1**      Update & maintain the Communications network that is vital to an efficient response to wildfires.

**STRATEGY 1.2**      By working with the State Fire Marshal, Emergency Management agencies, and Environmental Protection officials, establish a procedure for issuing burn bans whether partial or statewide that will limit the potential hazard to the citizens and the environment.

**STRATEGY 1.3**      Analyze and review the latest equipment technology & detection/suppression methods to determine the most effective use of the limited resources and manpower of this agency and the State's wildfire community.

**STRATEGY 1.4**      Reactivate fire training program, including computerized fire simulator.

**Performance Indicators:**

- Number of wildfires
- Average fire size in acres
- Protected area burned (Land area burned compared to total land acreage protected by the agency)
- Residences protected (those protected from wildfires that were controlled by the agency's actions)
- Structures protected (Non-residential structures protected from wildfires that were controlled by the actions of the agency)

**Customers**

- All forest landowners in Louisiana
- Any citizens with property adjacent to forest land
- Businesses and citizens with economic ties to forest resources

**Limiting Factors**

- Weather
- Fire occurrence (man-made ignition sources like arson and debris burning)
- Cooperation from others in the fire service
- Forest types, accessibility, terrain, etc.

**OBJECTIVE 2**      **Assist Rural Fire Departments and Cooperators by providing equipment, information, & training that is essential to their ability to protect the public from the threat of fire both structural and wildland.**

**STRATEGY 2.1:**      Establish fire protection procedures, both dispatch and suppression, between LDAF and local entities having fire responsibilities such as 911 dispatchers & Rural Fire Departments.

**STRATEGY 2.2**      Provide direct support in organizing, training, and equipping eligible Rural Fire Departments with cost-share assistance through the Rural Community Fire Protection Program.

**STRATEGY 2.3**      Administer the Federal Excess Property Program which allows this agency to look for and acquire useable excess property at military bases and government holding areas throughout the South. This acquired property can be loaned to Fire Departments across the state for use in fire suppression activities.

**STRATEGY 2.4**      Develop a training program dealing with wildland fire suppression techniques that can be offered to Rural Fire Departments.

**Performance Indicators:**

- Dollar value of FEPP property acquired
- Number of VFD assisted through RCFP program

### **Customers**

- Rural volunteer fire departments

### **Limiting Factors**

- Availability of federal property through FEPP, competition from other users.
- Availability of federal funding through RCFP program
- Coordination success with other VFD training entities (LSU Firemen Training)

**OBJECTIVE 3:**     **Assure the continued safety of agency employees and the citizens we assist.**

**STRATEGY 3.1**     Provide all fire & field personnel with personal protective equipment (PPE) such as hard hats, gloves, safety glasses, fire retardant coveralls, etc.

**STRATEGY 3.2**     Develop guidelines to assure compliance with all Departmental policy dealing with safety issues.

**STRATEGY 3.3**     Stress the use and importance of PPEs and other safety issues during meetings with personnel.

**STRATEGY 3.4**     Monitor innovations in safety equipment & techniques to determine the usefulness to the agency and its employees and apply them as applicable.

### **Performance Indicators:**

- Agency safety records

### **Customers**

- Agency employees
- Cooperating fire control personnel

### **Limiting Factors**

- Budget
- Availability of appropriate equipment for southern fire fighting applications
- Technology
- Research

**OBJECTIVE 4**     **Increase private, nonindustrial forest land productivity through the promotion of sound forest management practices by providing technical assistance.**

**STRATEGY 4.1**     Increase acres planted in trees on small forest landowners acres by 10 percent each year.

Provide financial assistance to eligible landowners for establishing and improving a crop of trees by utilizing the Forestry Productivity Program,

Stewardship Incentives Program and the Forestry Incentives Program.

**STRATEGY 4.2** Increase woodland assistance to private, nonindustrial landowners by 5 percent each year.

Through personal, individual contacts, place under improved forest practices as many as possible of the small timber tracts and farm woodlots in the state.

**STRATEGY 4.3** Increase implementation rate of Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs)  
Train landowners, managers and timber harvesters in the use of forestry BMPs.  
Conduct surveys on implementation and effective monitoring of forestry BMPs.  
Update the BMP manual.

**Performance Indicators:**

- Number of acres of tree planting, small owners
- Number of acres of prescribed burning, small owners
- Number of management plans written
- Implementation rate of Forestry Best Management Practices

**Customers**

- Forest landowners throughout Louisiana
- Forestry industry including timber harvesting businesses
- Support industries to forest industry
- All citizens who utilize our forest and forest-related resources

**Limiting Factors**

- Landowners willing to actively manage forestland
- Funding for cost-share assistance
- Seedling availability
- Timber prices
- **Technology**
- Environmental constraints
- Industry support

**OBJECTIVE 5** **NURSERY PRODUCTION: Produce a crop of quality seedlings to meet 85% of current demand by Private Nonindustrial Forest Landowners PNIF.**

**STRATEGY 5.1** Plant and grow a crop of quality seedlings.

Utilize the three state seedling nurseries as efficient farms to grow 30,000,000 seedlings for use by Louisiana forest landowners.

Harvest, package, and ship seedlings to all cooperators, utilizing manpower and equipment available in such a manner as to insure quality of the product.

**Performance Indicators:**

- Percentage of pine seedling demands met, small owners
- Percentage of hardwood seedling demands met, small owners

**Customers**

- Private non-industrial forestland owners
- Contract Cooperators
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- La. Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries
- U.S. Forest Service

**Limiting Factors**

- NIF Demand for the year
- Weather
- Contractor Demand
- Seed Availability
- Labor Availability

**OBJECTIVE 6**

**The Forestry Program will continue to promote public awareness of the value of trees and forestry, including urban forests. Project Learning Tree (PLT), a popular program among school teachers in Louisiana, is being enhanced with a special Louisiana Forestry component.**

**STRATEGY 6.1**

Administer the Urban & Community Forestry grant program which provides funds to towns and communities for urban forestry improvements and planning. Provide new grant dollars as available and monitor activity under existing grants.

**STRATEGY 6.2**

The agency will provide technical urban forestry assistance to communities, public agencies, non-profit Agreen@ organizations, schools and the general public. We will continue to provide technical assistance to all entities who request same. We will provide technical assistance of some in over 100 communities annually.

**STRATEGY 6.3**

Urban forestry staff will participate in numerous education and training events concerning urban forestry, assisting all entities who request it.



- STRATEGY 6.4** Agency will coordinate closely with the Louisiana Urban Forestry Council, consisting of over 300 members statewide.
- STRATEGY 6.5** Agency will continue to lead the Project Learning Tree program in Louisiana and train educators in environmental education so that the information will be passed on to our school children in an accurate, consistent manner
- STRATEGY 6.6** Promote fire-safe homes and communities through the implementation of the Firewise Communities USA program.

**Performance Indicators:**

- Number of urban forestry assists
- Number of media activities
- Number of PLT Workshops
- Number of PLT Educators trained
- Number of talks to adult and youth groups
- Number of communities assisted with Firewise Communities USA program

**Customers**

- Communities
- Public agencies
- Non-profit organizations
- Schools
- Adult and youth groups
- General population

**Limiting Factors**

- Local community capacity to develop and sustain urban forestry and Firewise programs
- Sponsors, partners, financial supporters
- Budgets of participating entities
- Technology
- Number of trained facilitators
- Support from school boards and administrators

**OBJECTIVE 7**      **Provide effective law enforcement to reduce loss of timber resources to landowners of this state.**

**STRATEGY 7.1**

Develop civil rules and/or regulations requiring certain information be collected and maintained by timber receiving facilities to aid in the investigations of timber theft complaints. Keep all complainants informed and updated on the progress of their complaint.

Continue to educate District Attorney's, Judges and other enforcement organizations on the seriousness of timber theft so that they may understand the problem and recognize the fine line between a criminal offense and a civil complaint.

Work with border states to develop and enact similar legislation to better document the movement of timber resources between our states.

**STRATEGY 7.2** Increase awareness of landowners to the threat of losses of their timber resources by fire and theft.

**STRATEGY 7.3** We are developing a 4 hour timber security seminar for presentation to landowners to educate them in the care, protection and marketing of their forest resource.

Expand our media efforts with regard to public awareness.

Increase prevention efforts targeted at specific areas.

**Performance Indicators:**

- Number of forestry investigations

**Customers**

- All forest landowners
- Citizens with real estate or other property adjacent to forest lands
- Forest industry and related suppliers and vendors

**Limiting Factors**

- Manpower
- Documentation requirements on timber movement
- Support from other law enforcement entities
- Public awareness and willingness to act



## **OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT & FINANCE**

**CRAIG GANNUCH, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER**  
**(225) 952-8142**

Judy Fletcher, Director – Fiscal Services

Rene Simon, Director – LA Ag Finance Authority

Terry Boykin, Director – Human Resources

Wilfred (Billy) Hebert, Director – Property Control

Kris Hutchinson, Director – Information Technology Services

Pete Rudesill, Director – Fleet and Facility Maintenance

**OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE**

The Office of Management and Finance is comprised of the Executive Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Office of the Assistant Commissioner.

The Executive Office includes the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Confidential Assistant, Public Information Officer, Legal staff, Internal Auditor, and Safety and Emergency Preparedness, as well as clerical support for each of these offices.

The internal auditor receives administrative direction from the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner and serves as the Department's chief internal auditor. The internal auditor has developed an internal audit charter and provides an annual assessment of risks. The internal auditor reviews the Department's accounting system and its policies and procedures, and provides an independent evaluation of internal controls and transactions.

The Office of the Assistant Commissioner of Management and Finance includes the following functional areas: Fiscal Services, Auditing, Fleet and Facility Maintenance, Market Bulletin, Human Resources, Purchasing, Property and Control, LA Ag Finance Authority and Management Information Systems. All functions related to accounting and budget control, procurement, contract management, program analysis, management information systems, auditing, personnel, payroll, fleet management, building maintenance, printing and typesetting, and Federal grants for all sections of the Department are performed within the Office of Management and Finance. Services rendered by the Office of Management and Finance include Soil and Water Conservation and Forestry; two major administrative units, the Food Distribution Program and the Motor Fuels Program; and the Boll weevil Eradication Program. The Legislative transfer of the two agencies and the transfer of the Food Distribution Program by Executive Order of the Governor, the Motor Fuels Program by an Act of the Legislature, and the creation of the Boll Weevil Eradication Program, have substantially increased budgetary and administrative responsibilities. Specific functions of each section of the Office of Management and Finance follow.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

Support Services consists of functional areas including clerical personnel for statewide district offices, budget preparation and accounting services, financial reporting, federal funds management, purchasing, printing and mail operations, document imaging, and management information services.

The Office of Management and Finance provides clerical personnel for seven offices located throughout the state. These personnel report directly to the Office of Management and Finance; however, daily work assignments include routine clerical functions for any division represented in the districts.

Office accountants for the major divisions, directed by the Department's fiscal officer, prepare an annual budget request of approximately \$104 million and 710 positions for presentation to the Legislature. Revenue collections of approximately \$50 million and all expenditures are monitored and analyzed for compliance with State budgetary guidelines, and information concerning budget status is provided to each section head on an ongoing basis.

All purchasing functions, including bidding, issuing and approving release orders for state contract items, and processing of accounts payable documents are handled through the purchasing section. Additional services, such as the Women and Minority Set Aside Program and leasing transactions, are provided by this section.

The Department operates a small print shop; this section receives all requests for printed material and either provides printing services or forwards requests to outside print shops. All mail operations, including inter- and intra-department messenger services, are handled by this section. The Department has initiated a document imaging program, whereby the Commissioner's goal is for this Department to become a paperless agency.

### **AUDITING**

The Audit division was originally created in 1983 around a single program (the Louisiana Agricultural Commodity Dealer and Warehouse Law) as a response to several bankruptcies in the then unregulated grain industry. Since 1983, the duties and responsibilities of the Audit division have grown to include eight major program responsibilities as well as providing accounting and auditing services to the Department and its various subdivisions. The Department and its boards and commissions have a direct impact upon the \$9.5 billion per year farm economy of Louisiana (2008 figures, LSUAgCenter).

In keeping with the philosophies of the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry, the audit staff has been cross-utilized as much as possible in order to increase efficiency and minimize the cost of audit services. The yearly audit scheduling cycle is based on program objectives rather than any constant, static staff assignments. The Audit division operates much as an in-house accounting and auditing firm, providing accounting and auditing services to the various boards and commissions housed within the Department and for the Department's various subdivisions. Services are charged out to the boards and commissions and/or to the Office of Management and Finance, according to the job performed.

During the twenty-five years of its existence, the Audit division has accomplished its original objective of bringing stability and security to Louisiana farmers who deal with licensed grain dealers and warehousemen. This is largely due to the close monitoring of the financial health of these licensees by the Audit division. The Agricultural Commodities Commission has increased oversight of the grain industry by monitoring "weak" licensees during the license year and creating a self-insurance program. In order to help bring some stability to a troubled industry, the Commission has been given the additional duty of regulating cotton merchants and agents licensed to buy cotton from Louisiana producers.

The Audit division operates most effectively as a division within the Department to serve as support to the various boards and commissions, and to the Department. Because of the expertise in farm and farm-related enterprise auditing and accounting, and the understanding of statutory reporting and compliance needs of the Department, the Audit division best serves the public by remaining situated within the Department of Agriculture and Forestry. Its existence should be continued due to the valuable audit and accounting services provided. The division is in accordance with the original mission and is also undertaking additional responsibilities not originally foreseen, (i.e., Louisiana Soil and Water Law, Louisiana Livestock Sanitary Law, Louisiana Fertilizer Law, Louisiana Feed and Seed laws, Louisiana Reforestation Cooperative Endeavor Program, Louisiana Boll Weevil Eradication Law, the Louisiana Dairy Stabilization Board, sweet potato assessment audits, Crawfish Promotion Board audits, and assessment audits for various other promotional boards). Through cross-training and cross-utilization of the audit staff, the expenses of the division have been minimized and efficiency has been maximized.

### **FLEET AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE**

This section is responsible for both fleet and building maintenance. Fleet maintenance

consists of maintenance and repair of approximately 800 vehicles, 263 trailers, 167 tractors and other road-use and off-road vehicles. Three vehicle maintenance facilities, under the supervision of the fleet director, are located in the northern, central, and southern areas of the state, and employ approximately 15 mechanics and service personnel. A staff of 25 employees, at times aided by other employees through cross-utilization, is employed to maintain several LAFA and LDAF facilities located throughout the state. LAFA facilities consist of 106 properties and 253 buildings at 12 sites with approximately 250,000 square feet of office, laboratory and shop/maintenance space.

### **PROPERTY CONTROL**

The Property Control division is responsible for property control, fleet management, central supply, central receiving, printing, mailing, messenger services, archiving and warehousing.

Property control consists of all facets of asset management -- tagging, tracking, and the annual movable property inventory of over 14,000 items valued at more than \$50 million. Fleet management includes obtaining all titles, licenses, registrations and plates for Department units, as well as monthly tracking of usage and operating expenditures. In addition, the fleet manager also coordinates the Voyager fuel program and monitors the Department's GPS program.

Central supply issues office, janitorial, and safety supplies to all Department offices and district locations, as well as veterinary supplies to veterinarians and animal health technicians statewide. Central Receiving is responsible for documenting and issuing all local incoming purchases and receipts.

Printing and mailing services handle all interoffice mail, all incoming and outgoing mail and department printing needs.

Administrative Services coordinates all internal archiving, warehousing and storage in four separate facilities.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

The Human Resources division serves as the agency's centralized office for personnel services, payroll, and employee benefits. The division provides services for 710 full-time authorized positions and 600 seasonal employees, plus various boards and commissions within the Department. Approximately 60 percent of the Department's employees are located throughout the state, rather than in Baton Rouge. The division also serves as custodian of all active and inactive employee records and documents, and is the central processing office for all personnel documents and forms which must be filed with other agencies.

This division is responsible for coordinating all benefits programs, which include retirement, worker's compensation, insurance, and training programs. Further, this division makes training schedules available to all employees, coordinates registration, and also develops and/or secures special training courses when needed to meet specific needs of the agency. The division maintains all pertinent workers' compensation records of injuries and payments, and serves as liaison between the employee, the medical providers, and the state worker's compensation insurance carrier.

The Human Resources division provides advice and assistance in disciplinary matters and employee grievance proceedings. Functions include investigating employee grievances or disciplinary problems through hearings or other means, advising agency managers of the appropriate course of action to take to avoid or resolve a grievance or disciplinary problem, and ensuring that all actions taken are in accordance with Civil Service rules and requirements.

The Human Resources division reviews and monitors agency jobs, makes recommendations for new or revised jobs needed within the agency, makes recommendations for new or revised qualification requirements for agency jobs, reviews pay evaluations of agency jobs, and makes recommendations on pay changes that may be justified.

Employees of this division serve as Department representatives before the Civil Service Commission, in unemployment hearings, and in other similar proceedings.

The Human Resources division is responsible for the agency's Equal Employment Opportunity efforts, and for preparing and monitoring the agency's annual Affirmative Action Plan.

In accordance with agency needs and the instructions of the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry, the Human Resources division develops agency personnel policies covering disciplinary matters, use of leave, and other matters, and disseminates this information through an Employee Handbook and a Supervisor's Handbook, both of which were developed and are maintained by division personnel.

### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES**

The Information Technology Services division offers two main sections of support: computer application programming and technical. The division supports over 800 users of equipment and systems. Personnel in this division ensure that the data for 75 unique systems are continuously available to users. Some systems are made available to the public.

The application programming section employs application analysts that are responsible for flowcharting, coding, compiling, testing, debugging, modifying and documenting new and existing application programs within accepted standards, procedures and guidelines for both regulatory programs and internal management databases. Additionally, the analysts in this area are responsible for assistance in the evaluation of user requests for changes to determine specific tasks and effects on existing programs and systems, discuss and explain program and system modifications to users, and write user guides and production documentation.

The technical support section is subdivided into four areas: server and network, document imaging, telecommunications, and user helpdesk. The technical support division provides service to 30 district offices statewide. Server and network specialists design and implement current technology throughout the client/server architecture deployed on the department's Local and Wide Area Networks. The Department uses document imaging for record retention and workflow. There are applications in place that retain images of personnel records, cattle and horse sale check-ins, brands, and equine registrations, as well as a complete workflow process for enforcement of agro-environmental inspections, mail, and revenue receipts. Information Technology Services maintains all telephone systems and cabling. Telecommunication specialists are responsible for deploying, maintaining, and supporting internal, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and site to site telephone communications equipment. Personnel in the telecommunications area are also charged with adding to the fiber optic and copper infrastructure that allows the Department's offices to communicate cost efficiently.

The Helpdesk provides training and support to the users of the Department's information systems. This includes in-house applications and the computer software and hardware required to run them.

### **MARKET BULLETIN/MARKET NEWS**

The Louisiana Market Bulletin is published by the Department under the authority of a Legislative Act of June 6, 1900 for the purpose of disseminating market information. The first bulletin was published in 1906 and its existence is significant as it enables thousands of people to buy and sell various types of farm, home and garden-related items.

The Louisiana Market Bulletin assists in marketing Louisiana products and services not normally available through commercial channels and also disseminates news and information to the agricultural community. Circulation fluctuates between 13,000 to 13,500 bi-weekly and is by subscription only at a rate of ten dollars (\$10.00) annually. The Louisiana Market Bulletin is also posted on the Department's web site at [www.ldaf.state.la.us](http://www.ldaf.state.la.us) one week after the posted publication date.

Advertising in the bulletin is free; however, there are restrictions in place as to what qualifies to be advertised and the size of the ad. Ads are not accepted from commercial businesses. Nearly 12,000 ads are placed each year in the publication. The Louisiana Market Bulletin was expanded to sixteen (16) pages in November, 2008.



# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

**OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE**

## **OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **MISSION**

The Office of Management and Finance's mission is to specify, procure and allocate resources necessary to support the mission of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry. Management and Finance is comprised of the Executive Office and the following functional areas: support services, auditing, fiscal services, fleet and facility management, human resources, legal, management information systems, procurement, property control, market bulletin, Louisiana Ag Finance Authority, print shop and mail room operations.

### **GOAL:**

To ensure that all programs in Agriculture and Forestry are provided department-wide coordination, personnel and basic resources which are essential to the accomplishments of the Department's mission, in a timely, effective and accurate manner and in compliance with applicable laws, rules and regulations.

### **Objective 1**

Enhance the ability of each office within the department to meet its goals through information systems management and use of technology.

Preserve and protect state resources allocated to the department by maintaining effective property control, auditing, and fiscal management practices.

Continually evaluate policy, procedure and programs to ensure maintenance and development of best possible management practices.

Continue to provide a safe and healthful environment for employees through regular inspections, maintenance and up-grading of facilities and equipment.

Respond in a timely and satisfactory manner to all requests from the Commissioner and the various boards and commissions for non-routine services.

Strategy 1.1 Monitor budget and advise various offices of budget status.

Strategy 1.2 Make training continually available to all users to further educate them in the Computer systems that they are working on and have available to them.

Strategy 1.3 Continue an effective central receiving unit, following policies, procedures and regulations. Implementation of a computer program to track deliveries/receipts.

Strategy 1.4 Adequately respond to all requests for non-routine audit and accounting services.

Strategy 1.5 Created an internal auditor position to oversee the offices within the department.

### **Accountability (Performance Indicators)**

- \* Number of objectives not accomplished due to insufficient support services
- \* Number of repeat audit findings
- \* Percent of technical support provided to meet internal customer requirements
- \* Percent of helpdesk calls resolved

**Customers**

- Vendors
- Citizens of Louisiana

**Limiting Factors**

- Funding

**Objective 2**

To ensure that accurate and timely information is available to the state's agricultural community by ensuring 10 agricultural market reporters maintain their accreditation with USDA. To provide opportunities for the sale of agricultural products and services to Louisiana Market Bulletin subscribers through internet access and in print on a bi-weekly basis at a cost not to exceed .59 per issue.

- Strategy 2.1 To compile market reports on livestock, fruits and vegetable, grain, rice, poultry and eggs, pecans that will aid producers, consumers and distributors in the sale and purchase of the reported commodities.
- Strategy 2.2 Disseminate market reports via mailed reports, leased wire services (Associated Press), USDA leased wire services and the internet.
- Strategy 2.3 Maintain training and certification by USDA of livestock brand inspectors, health technicians and meat inspectors to serve as livestock market reports in order to represent over 75% of cattle sold in Louisiana livestock auction markets.
- Strategy 2.4 Provide marketing assistance to cattle producers in direct marketing of cattle to feedlots and processing plants.
- Strategy 2.5 Provide opportunities for the sale of agricultural products and services to Market Bulletin subscribers through internet access and in print on a bi-weekly basis.

**Accountability (Performance Indicators)**

- \* Cost per copy of Market Bulletin distributed
- \* Number of advertising opportunities provided
- \* Number of copies of the Market Bulletin distributed per year

**Customers**

- Farmers
- Agribusinesses
- Data Users
- Governmental Entities

**Limiting Factors**

- Funding
- Personnel



## **OFFICE OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION**

**BRADLEY E. SPICER, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER**  
**(225) 922-1269**

**Joey Breaux, Director – Soil & Water Conservation District Programs**

**Butch Stegall – Program Manager**

## **OFFICE OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Louisiana's Soil and Water Conservation Commission (formerly the Soil Conservation Committee) was established by the State Legislature in 1938, making it one of the older agencies in state government, authorized in LA R.S. Title 3, Chapter 9, Parts I & II. The Commission was established in response to widespread soil erosion, water quality, and flooding concerns, and in recognition of the state's agricultural and range lands being among the basic assets of the state, and that the preservation of these lands is necessary to protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of its people. In 1976, the program was placed within the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development. In 1987 the legislature, in its efforts to streamline state government, moved the program into the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry's Office of Soil and Water Conservation (OSWC). The Legislative Act charges the OSWC with the responsibilities of protecting and conserving the state's soil and water resources. The OSWC is authorized to establish soil and water conservation programs for the purpose of working with landowners and governmental entities in planning and implementing soil and water conservation measures on the land. Many of the OSWC's activities are implemented through the State's 44 local Soil & Water Conservation Districts (conservation districts), and in partnership with the USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and USDA - Farm Service Agency (FSA). The local conservation district program is the only program, state or federal, that provides technical assistance to landowners for the primary purpose of protecting our soil and water resources. The Commission is responsible for creation of the soil and water conservation districts and establishment of their supervisory boards. The OSWC staff assists the Commission in overseeing conservation district operations, including district supervisor elections and appointments, allocation of state appropriated funds to the districts, providing technical assistance and administrative oversight, assisting with implementation of watershed protection and other special projects, and development of cooperative agreements with federal, state and other local agencies as necessary to enhance their local conservation programs. The Commission, working with the OSWC, is also responsible for ensuring that annual financial audits are conducted in each of the 44 conservation districts.

The OSWC is charged with the responsibility of protecting and enhancing the soil, water and related resources of our state. This has been accomplished since the inception of the state's conservation program over seventy years ago through formal partnership agreements between the OSWC, the Commission, the USDA, the NRCS, FSA, each individual conservation district and most importantly, Louisiana's landowners and managers. The Louisiana Soil & Water Conservation program has been highly successful in the protection of our soil and water resources throughout the state, including many fragile coastal wetland areas. Louisiana has a total land and water surface area of about 30.5 million acres. This area comprises approximately six million acres of cropland, nearly 14 million acres of forestland, 2.5 million acres of pastureland with the remaining acreage being comprised of wetlands, water, urban and other uses. The OSWC, working with conservation districts and its other resource management partners, helps private landowners plan and install comprehensive natural resource management systems using conservation practices that help conserve Louisiana's natural resources and protect the environment for the benefit of all its citizens.

There are 44 USDA NRCS field offices located throughout Louisiana. All but three of the 44 conservation districts are housed in one of these USDA service centers. The NRCS provides office space, and most office equipment and supplies necessary to operate the local district program. The district and NRCS staffs work together to serve the clients in each district, and the NRCS provides technical and managerial training to the district personnel. Each district is managed by its five member board of supervisors who volunteer their time and expertise to oversee the operation of the district, management of the district employees and resources, administer the local conservation programs, and to coordinate the district programs with those of the NRCS. Conservation districts and the OSWC continually review, and if necessary, renew the Memoranda of Understanding with the USDA and other partners. As a result of the local soil and water conservation district programs, millions of federal dollars each year are provided to assist land users in protecting the states resource base. The NRCS presence in any district is predicated on an active soil and water conservation district program. Without an active conservation district program, the NRCS and other USDA agencies programs, funds and staff support are in jeopardy.

The State Soil & Water Conservation Commission is made up of eight members: five representatives are elected to the Commission by their fellow conservation district supervisors, the Chancellor of LSU Agricultural Center and the Commissioner of Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, who are members by virtue of their offices, and the President of the Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts. The Commission has the responsibility to secure operating funds for the conservation districts, and for providing them guidance on operational policy and related issues. The OSWC oversees soil and water conservation district operations in respect to expenditure of funds, contracts and other administrative matters, partners with the districts to implement OSWC programs and provides staff support to the Conservation Commission.

Conservation districts' primary source of funding is from state legislative appropriations. These funds are placed within the LDAF-OSWC annual appropriations and distributed to the conservation districts on a monthly basis. Individual district funding levels are determined by a workload allocation formula approved by the Commission. It has been decades since the districts have received adequate funding; current funding levels prevent the districts from maximizing their potential effectiveness. Despite this, admirable conservation accomplishments are achieved, but the conservation districts are financially unable to fully accommodate the local conservation need. Funding shortfalls translate to inadequate technical assistance to landowners. This lack of state level funding also reduces the potential for leveraging additional federal economic support for many rural Louisiana communities.

Based on Gross Farm Income with value added, it is estimated that the state spent less than one dollar for soil and water conservation for every \$4,130.00 generated by the state's agriculture industry (2008 Ag Summary), and amounts to one dollar from the state for every 50 dollars contributed by the NRCS. The current funding level of **2.3 million dollars** (FY 2009) is far below the level of funding required to conduct an optimum state soil and water conservation program through which resource management measures can be adequately implemented to fully address the states most serious conservation related concerns. It is critical that districts are able

to provide the resources necessary to achieve healthy soils and clean water for the protection of the health, safety and general welfare of Louisiana's citizens, and to leverage adequate financial resources from the NRCS and other federal sources. To enable this requirement, districts must be financially able to employ and maintain a technical staff with conservation planning and application skills. There are, on the average, 100 to 110 full and part-time conservation district employees throughout the state, and over eighty-five percent of state funds allocated to the districts are used for employee salaries.

Even with serious budget shortfalls, Louisiana has one of the most effective conservation programs in the nation. The key to the success of the state's soil and water conservation program is the authority given to local districts to enter into cooperative conservation agreements with individual landowners, and to cooperate with NRCS in implementing USDA Farm Bill conservation programs.

The cooperative agreements are voluntary, non-binding agreements used to guide and encourage landowners to plan and install conservation practices and environmental protection measures. Therefore, a major responsibility of the conservation district personnel is to provide technical assistance to landowners to get conservation practices on the land. There are more than 50,000 Louisiana landowners that have cooperative agreements with their local conservation districts, accounting for over 17,000,000 acres of land. Of this amount, nearly 14.5 million acres are currently under active conservation planning management.

To this end, a principle function of the district board of supervisors is to identify local resource management needs and concerns, and identify solutions and resources necessary to address them in an efficient manner. One of the most ready solutions is landowner participation in any one of the USDA Farm Bill conservation programs, through which landowners receive cost-share or incentive payments to install conservation practices. To encourage optimum participation, districts annually conduct "locally-led" conservation meetings where local conservation needs are identified and prioritized, and then through district led "local work group" meetings, Farm Bill conservation programs are tailored to local conservation priorities. Through this process, districts are able to access federal cost-share funding for landowners, but often do not receive enough financial support themselves to administer all the federal conservation funds successfully harnessed to address their local priorities. The OSWC and the Commission aid and encourage the districts in their ceaseless efforts to secure financial and technical resources to address their identified conservation priorities. The strength of the state's soil and water conservation program lies in the ability of our federal, state and local resource management agencies to work in unison to address the state's resource management priorities.

Despite the static and often diminishing State funding to districts, their workload continues to compound as an increasing number of landowners apply for federal conservation programs. Districts are responsible for providing technical assistance to our farmers and ranchers who must meet the requirements of the conservation provisions of USDA Farm Bills dating back to 1985. Also, with each successive Farm Bill, the conservation district's workloads have increased exponentially. In the first year of the 2009 farm bill, conservation district employees have assisted Louisiana farmers and ranchers implement conservation measures valued at over 108 million federal dollars. This is a large annual investment that provides significant environmental

and economic benefits to rural Louisiana. All of Louisiana's citizens ultimately benefit from these agricultural programs.

Soil erosion decreases soil productivity, reduces crop yields, increases production costs, adversely impacts water quality and contributes to flooding. It is not possible to place an accurate dollar value on a ton of soil washed off the land in terms of lost productivity and off-site damages, yet in the past fiscal year, approximately 45,000 landowners received technical assistance through the district programs, and conservation practices were applied to approximately 1.2 million acres of land. It is estimated that the implementation of the conservation practices saved over 2.5 million tons of soil from eroding and washing into our lakes, streams, and drainways each year. In terms of productivity, this equates to preventing the excessive loss of top soil from over 5,000 acres of cropland annually. If these acres were planted in cotton, it would result in a value added loss of five to six million dollars each year in farm income. Accumulative losses could exceed a quarter of a billion dollars in ten years or less. Soil and water conservation agreements are also being implemented on nearly 850,000 acres of marshlands. Wetland management plans are presently being implemented on most of this acreage. The district program is the only significant state program that provides individual landowners with coastal marshland and interior wetland protection assistance.

Also, Federal legislation requires farmers who farm highly erodible lands to have conservation plans developed and conservation measures fully implemented on their land. Unless these federal requirements are met, landowners are not eligible for USDA program benefits. The district and the NRCS are required to continue to provide technical assistance to program participants from year to year to insure they maintain their eligibility for federal program benefits. Louisiana farmers in recent years have received on an average more than 140 million dollars in commodity crop benefits. A large amount of these benefits could be in jeopardy if the farms are not in compliance with the conservation provisions of past Farm Bill regulations and requirements.

### **OSWC/LDNR Multi-Year Coastal Marsh Re-vegetation Planting Program**

There are extensive benefits derived through the district program in the areas of water quality protection, soil stability and fertility, wetlands management and coastal protection. The OSWC in a joint effort with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conducts a major wetland re-vegetation program and assists DNR with other components of their coastal wetland management and protection program. Under this program, nearly 700 miles of site specific plant materials have been planted to protect shorelines and wetlands from eroding throughout coastal Louisiana. This program results in protection of ten's of thousands of acres of coastal marshland from being destroyed by erosion and degradation. Also, the Assistant Commissioner for the OSWC is a member of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority of Louisiana, the Atchafalaya Basin Research and Promotion Board, Louisiana Ground Water Commission, Climate Change Policy Commission and other natural resource commissions and boards.



### **USDA- State Cooperative Soil Survey Program**

The OSWC is designated as the official state agency to cooperate with the NRCS to carry out the Federal - State Cooperative Soil Survey Program. District and OSWC personnel assist in providing soil interpretation to individuals and to other government entities. The soil survey is a basic tool used by government agencies, industries and businesses, and individual landowners to determine site suitability for selected land uses and for identifying management practices required to protect soil as well as water resources. The Soil Survey data is also used to determine which lands are under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 Jurisdictional Wetlands and prior converted and farmed wetlands under NRCS jurisdiction. These determinations are critical in regard to landowner eligibility for USDA program benefits, and in determining if a landowner is in violation of jurisdictional wetland regulations. The Soil Survey is an important tool used in the development of resource management plans required to implement the many state and federal conservation programs, as well as for proper planning of any type land use or development.

### **EPA Clean Water Act, Section 319 – Agricultural Nonpoint Source Protection Program**

The OSWC is responsible for carrying out the state's nonpoint source pollution abatement program on agricultural lands. This program, through EPA grants, generates over four million dollars annually in cost-share funds for implementing water quality protection measures on agriculture lands. The OSWC also provides assistance to other offices within the Department of Agriculture and Forestry on water quality and other natural resource management matters. The OSWC, in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, carries out several other similar environmental protection programs. Current grants are in excess of 12 million dollars including federal and private landowners matching funds. This effort could also double over the next five years. The implementation of both the conservation components of the Farm Bill and the EPA Nonpoint Source Pollution Control programs provides great opportunities for the State to protect its soil and water resources.

The amount of EPA federal cost-share funds available through this program will likely continue to increase over the years. Additionally, district workloads continue to increase as a result of their efforts to assist landowners and users to achieve the environmental expectations of the state and federal governments as well as our citizens. At the federal and state levels, there are increased demands being put on the districts and the OSWC to increase efforts to develop and implement a comprehensive nonpoint source pollution control program on all private lands. The water quality protection efforts of the OSWC will continue to increase into the foreseeable future.

### **Agricultural Prescribed Burning Program**

In 1993, the State legislature under Act 589 directed the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry to conduct the Agriculture Smoke Management Program, a voluntary training program to certify individuals to conduct prescribed burning of agricultural crops; specifically

burning of sugar cane crop residue as a harvest management practice. The OSWC, in partnership with the LSU Ag Center, conducts annual training sessions for the certification of agricultural prescribed burners. Over 1700 individuals have been certified to conduct prescribed burns including 175 certified or recertified this current year (2009). Training sessions are conducted annually, prior to the start of the sugar cane harvest season. Individuals are required to be recertified every five years. This program has resulted in a dramatic reduction in nuisance complaints of off-site impacts from smoke and ash associated with agriculture burning.

### **Agricultural Solid Waste Management Program**

The OSWC is responsible for developing and implementing the state's Agriculture Solid Waste Best Management Practice Program. This program provides for beneficial use of waste streams generated by agriculture producers and agriculture, aquaculture and forestry processors. This program provides an opportunity for processors and producers to comply with state and federal environmental mandates in a non-regulatory manner, thereby reducing costs for both the state and the agriculture, aquaculture and forestry industries. Although this program has substantially increased the OSWC's workload in recent years, there were no state funds provided to assist in implementation. This program has already resulted in hundreds of agriculture producers and processors implementing water quality protection Best Management Plans that provide for the beneficial use of agricultural, seafood and wood waste that may have otherwise gone to landfills. It is difficult to estimate the economic benefits this voluntary program provides, but it is clear that it reduces costs to the waste generators as well as to the states' environmental regulatory agencies.

### **Federal Conservation Programs**

These conservation programs include the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Grazinglands Conservation Incentive (GLCI), Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP), Water Quality Improvement Projects, Waterfowl Habitat Improvement Projects and others. Compliance with the requirements of some of these programs affects the eligibility of farmers to participate in other Federal benefit programs. The OSWC, working through local soil and water conservation districts, provides assistance to landowners to insure they remain in compliance with a wide range of federal and state regulations. The above listed programs have provided in excess of 300 million dollars in cost-share funds to Louisiana landowners since 2006 and will provide an additional 200 million dollars over the next two years. These programs reduce the workloads of state environmental regulatory agencies and reduce regulatory requirements of private landowners and provide extensive environmental and economic benefits and at a reduced cost to landowners, agriculture, aquaculture and forestry related businesses and to the State of Louisiana.

Over the last fifteen years under the USDA Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) we have taken over 220,000 acres of marginal farmed wetlands out of agriculture production and planted this

acreage to bottomland hardwoods and other native wetland vegetation. This is a land easement program that allows the land to remain on the tax rolls, permits the landowner limited use of the land and provides for soil and water protection, wildlife habitat and timber improvements and floodwater retention. This program has already provided over \$200,000,000 to landowners in Louisiana. This program has also been instrumental in assisting state and federal wildlife agencies in reestablishing critical habitat for the endangered Louisiana Black Bear. The OSWC and districts also face a significant challenge in working with the federal agencies and landowners in an effort to reduce adverse impacts associated with EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permitting actions on jurisdictional wetlands. Nearly a half million acres of the state's prime farmlands have been affected by federal wetland mandates.

The OSWC, in partnership with the NRCS and FSA, is directly responsible for planning and implementation of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The CREP is a voluntary, incentive based conservation program that has provided over \$120 million dollars in incentive payments and cost-share payments to farmers and ranchers in the lower Ouachita River Basin in northeast Louisiana. Program participants have taken 50,000 acres of marginal cropland out of production; cropland deemed environmentally sensitive due to frequent inundation or excessive soil erosion potential. Converting these marginal croplands to woodlands or native grasses increases wildlife habitat, improves flood protection and water quality throughout the region, as well as reducing crop-loss subsidy payments. This program will provide significant long-term economic and environmental benefit for this entire region of the state. The OSWC is currently planning the Coastal Prairie CREP / Water Quality Improvement Program in partnership with the FSA and NRCS, The Nature Conservancy of Louisiana, Louisiana Ducks Unlimited and the local soil and water conservation districts in southwest LA. The focus of this program is to protect and improve water quality and to establish and/or improve endangered, native tall-grass prairie ecosystems in a seven parish area. The program is structured to allow for the OSWC to use limited state funds to leverage approximately 80 million dollars in federal, private and non-profit conservation organization funds to provide incentives to landowners to take their marginal cropland out of production and plant it to native tall-grass prairie vegetation. This project, when fully implemented, will reduce sediment loading of drainways and streams by 30 percent, will restore nearly 20,000 acres of native grass species to serve as critical habitat for declining, threatened and endangered species and other wildlife, will increase acreage of shallow water areas and wetlands for wildlife, and will reduce surface water impairments caused by nutrients and pesticides. This project will also reduce the use of water from the already stressed Chicot Aquifer by reducing the acreage of cropland irrigation.

### **Conservation Information-Education/Outreach Programs**

Project WET (Water Education for Teachers), an interdisciplinary water science and education program for formal and non-formal educators of students grades k-12, has been cosponsored in LA by the LDAF/OSWC and the LA Association of Conservation Districts since 1996 and is designed to provide young people with the knowledge and skills needed to make informed decisions regarding water resource management. Units of study include watersheds, wetlands, water science, surface and ground water, atmospheric water, wastewater management and many other relevant topics. This is the OSWC's centerpiece education program, through which

educators receive the Project WET Curriculum and Activity Guide for extended water conservation related activity use in the classroom. Healthy Water, Healthy People is a water quality education program designed by Project WET to encourage deeper investigation of water quality topics, issues and parameters through materials appropriate for educators of students in grades 6 through university level. The Wonders of Wetlands (WOW) curriculum supplement contains numerous activities covering all parameters of wetlands study including estuarine, riverine, and interior/upland wetlands of all types, salinity regimes, soil types, habitats, wildlife, and aquatic organisms. The activities of all three curriculum supplements are formatted identically to each other, creating opportunities for educators to build comprehensive, standards-based water and wetlands related lesson plans and study units. An average total of 500 educators per year are trained in 6-hour educator WET, HWHP, and WOW workshops. Educational "Water Festivals" are hosted annually in LA either by the OSWC, local conservation districts, the LSU Ag Center, or all three entities in partnership through which 300-600 students per festival learn about water conservation at interactive activity stations. Project WET is the programmatic backbone of all these festivals

Every year, most of the 44 conservation districts participate in the annual Soil & Water Stewardship Program, which consists of various materials depicting an annually revised conservation theme, and are developed and distributed to districts by the National Association of Conservation Districts. This program benefits all members of the community by providing a specific theme or frame of awareness for enhancing public perception of conservation needs. Stewardship materials are distributed throughout the community in many forms such as bookmarks, fact sheets, children's coloring books, calendars, place mats, informational booklets, and other items. These items are generally distributed through various civic organizations, church gatherings, Parish fairs, and similar events, reaching tens of thousands of children and families annually.

The Louisiana Master Farmer Program helps agricultural producers voluntarily address environmental concerns related to production agriculture, as well as enhance their production and resource management skills that will be critical for the continued viability of Louisiana agriculture. This program involves producers becoming more knowledgeable about environmental stewardship, resource-based production and resource management through a voluntary producer certification process. The Master Farmer program's education component is led by the LSU Agriculture Center, the preparation and implementation of farm-specific conservation practices and resource management systems is the responsibility of the local conservation districts and the NRCS. Qualifying producers are then certified as Louisiana Master Farmers by the LA Commissioner of Agriculture & Forestry.

## **IMPACTS**

The dollar value derived from protecting the state's soil resource base and our coastal and interior wetlands are difficult to establish as is the monetary value of keeping sediment and agriculture chemicals out of our waters. We do know, however, that the state social and economic future depends on no further degradation of the state's soil and water resources.

As a result of the OSWC and local conservation districts efforts, many federally funded agricultural programs are providing great economic and environmental benefits to Louisiana. Without the technical assistance provided by soil and water conservation districts, these programs would be adversely impacted. This is especially true of those programs associated with the USDA Farm Bills and the EPA agricultural nonpoint source pollution water quality programs. Without state and local participation, much of the more than 100 million dollars provided annually in federal funds may not be available to Louisiana's private landowners. The loss of these funds would weaken our state's economy, resulting in lost jobs, increasing numbers of foreclosures and reducing soil and water resources protection.

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

**OFFICE OF SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION**

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Office of Soil & Water Conservation is charged by the State legislature with the conservation and protection of the state's soil and water resources "as necessary to protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of its people". The OSWC is authorized to establish conservation programs for the purpose of working with landowners and other governmental entities in planning and implementing soil and water conservation and protective measures on the land. Many of the Office's activities are carried out in partnerships with 44 Soil & Water Conservation Districts, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and others. The Office of Soil & Water Conservation provides technical and financial assistance to the Conservation Districts through the State Soil & Water Conservation Commission.

**VISION:** "A Productive Louisiana Agriculture in Harmony With a Quality Environment"

## **MISSION:**

The mismanagement of agriculture processes and soil and water resources results in loss of soil productivity, degradation of water quality and wetlands, and increased flooding. The protection of these basic resources are necessary to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of our people. The mission of the Office of Soil and Water Conservation (OSWC) is to sustain and conserve water quality and soil stability on croplands, woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, and waterways of Louisiana. This is accomplished by providing financial assistance, administrative support, centralized direction and coordination to Louisiana's 44 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) which provide conservation planning services to landowners and managers, and by serving as the official state cooperating agency with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as required for federal conservation program benefits. Through this unique federal-state-local partnership, agricultural water quality and soil loss problems will be proactively addressed while considering private landowner needs and objectives.

## **PHILOSOPHY:**

Louisiana agriculture should be perceived by the public as environmentally compatible with the quality of our soil, water, air, plants, and animals and a benign component of our state's bountiful natural resources and alluring landscape. This productive landscape, most of which is privately owned, must continue to be properly managed to maintain the subtle balance and compatibility between agriculture and the environment. By developing and implementing economically feasible, voluntary natural resource management programs, traditional land uses and agricultural activities will continue in an environmentally sound manner.

## **GOAL:**

To achieve a productive balance between Louisiana agriculture processes and a healthy environment, wherein soil loss is reduced to within tolerable limits, water quality impairments due to agriculture processes are significantly reduced, and the quality of the state's wildlife habitat, wetlands, and other natural areas are enhanced.

**OBJECTIVE I (SOIL EROSION CONTROL): Apply soil erosion reduction practices on 450,000 acres of cropland, grazingland, rangeland and forestland, preventing the loss of 675,000 tons of topsoil for a cumulative total of 3,375,000 tons of topsoil saved from the 2011 level to 2016.**

**STRATEGY 1.1 Reduce cropland erosion on 250,000 acres.**

- Encourage implementation by land users of conservation tillage practices, crop residue management, cover crops, contour strips and other Best Management Practices on highly erodible cropland through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and other conservation initiatives.
- SWCD will develop Best Management Practices Plans specific to individual landuser operations.

**STRATEGY 1.2 Reduce grazingland/rangeland erosion on 100,000 acres.**

- Cause the implementation of planned grazing systems, streambank restoration practices, and multiple land use plans on grazingland through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and Conservation Stewardship Program.
- SWCDs will develop grazing plans that protect integrity of pastureland soils by promoting grazing management and diversity of land uses.
- Maintain native vegetation and hydrology on rangeland through the EQIP and the CSP.
- SWCDs will work to develop individual conservation plans to enhance native range vegetation and restore hydrology (historic drainage patterns).

**STRATEGY 1.3 Reduce forestland erosion on 50,000 acres.**

- Promote conservation measures such as tree and shrub establishment on marginal cropland and barren land through the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), EQIP and CSP programs.
- SWCDs will work with individual landowners to develop forest management plans and to promote forest stewardship on private lands.

**STRATEGY 1.4 Ensure the availability of current scientific soils data and information to continue the development and application of effective conservation practices.**

- Maintain the Cooperative Soil Survey Agreement with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service.
- OSWC and SWCD will continually review and update program requirements.
- Assist the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in revising soil classifications and soil use properties.
- SWCD and OSWC will periodically revise soil classifications through detailed field assessments.
- Continue conversion of soils data information to computer digital format.
- Provide land users with current site specific soils information for selected uses.



### **Accountability (Performance Indicators):**

- \*Reduction in Soil Erosion: Acres treated
- \*Reduction in Soil Erosion: Ton of topsoil saved
- \* No. Of Landowners Provided Technical Assistance

#### **CUSTOMERS**

- Land users/Cooperators
- Legislature
- Conservation Districts

#### **LIMITING FACTORS**

- Funding
- Soil Types/Topography
- Landuse Practices
- Seasonal Environmental Conditions

**OBJECTIVE II. (REDUCTION OF AG WASTE ): Reduce the disposal of agriculture solid waste from agricultural processing operations by increasing its beneficial use as organic fertilizer, mulch, and other useful products to 54% from the 2011 level to 2016.**

**STRATEGY 2.1 Increase beneficial use of agricultural organic waste from processing operations by 5%**

- Implement agriculture solid waste and nutrient management plans for agriculture processors such as sugar and rice mills, cotton gins, and seafood processors.
- OSWC will determine need and design of waste management plan upon inspection and monitoring of processing facility.
- Assist processors to develop waste management plans that meet all state and federal environmental laws and regulations.

**STRATEGY 2.2 Manage and reduce disposal of waste from 100 animal waste facilities**

- Design, implement, and/or rehabilitate animal waste management systems on livestock operations such as dairy farms, cattle and pork feedlots, and poultry operations through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and other state and federal environmental programs.
- OSWC works with partnering agencies to determine need and design of waste management system.
- Design and implement agriculture nutrient management systems which promote utilization of agricultural waste, soil testing for fertilizer application, streamside management zones and buffers, legume cover crops, and green manure crops.
- OSWC determines the rate of nutrient application for site specific animal waste applications and land cover based on soils.

**STRATEGY 2.3 Design and implement composting and other beneficial uses of agricultural wastes for 60% of agriculture processors.**

- OSWC and SWCDs evaluate agriculture operations as needed for development of composting plan.
- Assist processor in seeking viable waste use options.

**Accountability (Performance Indicators):**

- \* Percent of Agricultural Waste Utilized for Beneficial Use.  
(Field application for fertilizer or mulch, etc.)
- \* Number of Waste Management Plans Developed
- \* Number of Site Specific Waste Management Plans Implemented.

**CUSTOMERS**

- Local citizens/Community
- Private landowners
- Ag Processors
- Legislature
- Conservation Districts

**LIMITING FACTORS**

- Funding
- Product demand
- Soil Type/Topography
- Landuse practices
- Seasonal Environmental Conditions

**OBJECTIVE III. (PROTECTION OF WETLANDS AND WILDLIFE HABITAT):**

**Re-vegetate an additional 150 miles of coastal and interior shoreline for a cumulative total of 795 miles by 2016 and protect, enhance and restore 1,200,000 acres of inland and coastal wetlands, and wildlife habitat.**

**STRATEGY 3.1 Enhance upland wildlife habitat on 100,000 acres**

- Assist landowners to develop conservation plans on agricultural lands to Include shelterbelts, field borders, riparian corridors and other wildlife management practices through the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and the Conservation Reserve Program.
- SWCD will assist to evaluate and rank area for habitat suitability and type and establish project priorities for enrolment in appropriate programs.

**STRATEGY 3.2 Restore and enhance 100,000 acres of interior wetlands and bottomland hardwoods on marginal cropland.**

- Encourage the reestablishment of bottomland hardwoods and/or traditional hydrology regimes on marginal cropland through the Wetlands Reserve Program ,the Ducks Unlimited-Louisiana Waterfowl Project and other programs.
- SWCD will assist in determination of site suitability for wetland and wildlife habitat value and enrollment in appropriate programs.

**STRATEGY 3.3 Re-vegetate 150 miles of coastal and interior shorelines and develop,**

**revise, and implement plans to enhance 950,000 acres of coastal and interior marshlands.**

- Continue implementation of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources/Coastal Restoration Division -LDAF/OSWC Coastal Marsh Re-vegetation Program.
- OSWC, SWCD evaluate sites for various environmental factors affecting success of re-vegetation projects.
- OSWC will continue to actively participate on the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Task Force.
- Plan and implement marsh re-vegetation and restoration projects for Coastal Zone Parishes
- OSWC will establish project priorities for the Coastal re-vegetation Program.
- OSWC will work with state and federal agencies in developing and implementing Coastal Wetland Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act Projects.
- OSWC will work with other state agencies in implementation of the Louisiana Coastal Conservation and Restoration Program.

**Accountability (Performance Indicators)**

\*Acres of agricultural wetlands restored during year

\*Acres of wetland habitat managed during year

\*Miles of shoreline treated for erosion control

**CUSTOMERS**

- Landowners
- Recreational & Commercial

**LIMITING FACTORS**

- Climate/Storm events
- Funding

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Fishermen               | -Landowner management objectives                   |
| -Parish Governments     | -Soil Type/Texture                                 |
| -Interagency Personnel  | -Herbivore damage                                  |
| -Conservation Districts | -Landowner participation                           |
| -Legislature            | -Economic feasibility of erosion control practices |

**OBJECTIVE IV.(WATER QUALITY): Reduce water quality impairments caused by agriculture production and processes establishment of vegetative Buffers riparian acres and nutrient management.**

**STRATEGY 4.1      Establish a total of 400,000 feet of vegetative buffer (filter strips) between agricultural lands and waterways.**

- Establish conservation practices such as riparian buffers, filter strips, grassed waterways, and wellhead protection areas through the CRP, EQIP and CSP.
- SWCDs evaluate impairments to water bodies resulting from agricultural processes and establish watershed management approaches to address identified causes.

**STRATEGY 4.2      Restore 2,080 miles of riparian habitat**

- Implement conservation and restoration practices to protect streambanks at cattle crossings and watering areas.
- SWCD will design and implement appropriate conservation management systems.

**STRATEGY 4.4      Reduce or eliminate discharge and runoff from 100 animal waste facilities. (Similar effort as in STRATEGY 2.2)**

- Design, implement and rehabilitate animal waste management systems on livestock operations such as dairy farm ,cattle and pork feedlots, and poultry operations through the EQIP and other state and federal environmental programs.
- OSWC works with partnering agencies to determine need and design of animal waste management systems.
- Design and implement agriculture nutrient management systems which promote utilization of agricultural waste, soil testing for fertilizer application, streamside management zones and buffers, legume cover crops, and green manure crops.
- Determine the rate of site specific nutrient application for solid wastes, soils and land cover.

### **Accountability (Performance Indicators)**

- \* Miles of vegetated buffer established.
- \* Miles of riparian habitat restored.
- \* No. of certified agriculture wetlands determinations completed.
- \* Number of animal waste management systems implemented
- \* Acres of nutrient management systems implemented

#### **CUSTOMERS**

- Local citizens
- Land users
- Interagency Personnel
- Conservation Districts
- Legislature
- Formal and non formal educators

#### **LIMITING FACTORS**

- Funding
- Climate
- Hydrology
- Teacher Participation
- Landuser Participation

### **OBJECTIVE V. (CONSERVATION INFORMATION EDUCATION AND OUTREACH):**

**Soil and water conservation training events will be conducted for 2,500 educators; school and community water festivals and Soil & Water Stewardship events will be conducted for 75,000 grade school students; 125 agricultural producers will be certified as Louisiana Master Farmers; Agricultural Prescribed Burning certifications will be issued/reissued for 1250 producers and 220 Locally-Led Conservation planning meetings will be conducted from 2011 to 2016.**

**Soil and water conservation education events will be conducted in schools and communities throughout the state, with special emphasis placed on those areas in which nonpoint source pollution, aquifer overdraft and other soil and water concerns are deemed most critical. Soil and water conservation materials will be disseminated through school and community venues.**

**STRATEGY 5.1 50 Project WET (Water Education for Teachers), Wonders of Wetlands, or Healthy Water, Healthy People workshops for educators will be planned and implemented.**

- OSWC and SWCDs will work with school administrators, Parish science supervisors, university education methods professors and others to plan educator workshops
- OSWC will work with other resource conservation agencies and organizations to maximize content and outreach potential.
- Correlate workshop activities to Grade Level Expectations as funding permits to maximize educator/student classroom relevance.

- Give priority to workshops planned in areas subject to NPS impairments, aquifer overdraft, etc.

**STRATEGY 5.2 5 Water festivals and 150 Soil & Water Stewardship events will be conducted for schools and communities.**

- Design a series of interactive activity stations for each water festival that illustrate local conservation concerns, needs and solutions
- OSWC will work with SWCDs to encourage local participation in the annually revised Soil Stewardship Program and to tailor the information to local natural resource concerns.

**STRATEGY 5.3 Master Farmer training sessions will be conducted as necessary to accommodate enrollment of agricultural producers into the LA Master Farmer Program.**

- The OSWC and the local SWCDs will coordinate with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the LSU Agricultural Center to maximize participation in the Master Farmer training sessions.
- The SWCDs will work with the USDA-NRCS and LSU to establish model farms as proving grounds and Master Farmer training sites.
- The SWCDs will review and approve Resource Management System conservation plans as required for producer certification as LA Master Farmers.
- the OSWC will document completion of all Master Farmer certification requirements.

**STRATEGY 5.4 Agricultural Prescribed Burning Certification training sessions will be conducted twice annually or as necessary to ensure maximum enrollment and participation by producers.**

- the OWSC will work with the LSU Agricultural Center to plan and implement burning certification trainings as necessary.

**STRATEGY 5.5 Each Soil & Water Conservation District will host at least one Locally-Led Conservation Planning meeting annually to determine local conservation needs and priorities.**

- the SWCDs will coordinate with the USDA-NRCS to advertise and to set up meeting times and places for maximum stakeholder and public attendance.
- the SWCDs will utilize information gathered and priorities established to guide their local efforts in conservation program delivery

**Accountability (Performance Indicators)**

- \* Number of educators trained in water and wetlands conservation
- \*Number of students reached through conservation festivals and soil stewardship events.
- \*Number of LA Master Farmers certified.
- \* Number of producers certified/recertified for agricultural prescribed burning.
- \* Number of Locally-Led conservation planning meetings conducted.

**CUSTOMERS**

- Local citizens
- Land users
- Interagency Personnel
- Conservation Districts
- Legislature
- Formal and non formal educators

**LIMITING FACTORS**

- Funding
- Teacher Participation
- Public Participation
- Land User/Producer participation

